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# **MAN IN INDIA**

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## ORIGIN OF AHAR CULTURE

DILIP KUMAR CHAKRABARTI

( Received on 11 January 1968 )

**Abstract.** The author examines the views proposed about the origin of Ahar culture in south-eastern Rajasthan. He thinks that existing evidences do not support that it was derived from Western Asia, or that it was due to an Aryan subjugation of craftsmen left over from the Harappan culture.

**S**INCE its initial discovery in 1954 at Ahar (*Indian Archaeology : A Review 1954-65, 1955-56* ; hereafter IAR) near Udaipur, the Ahar culture<sup>1</sup> has been reported upon by Sankalia (1962, IAR 1961-62) at the type site of Ahar and by Lal (IAR 1959-60) at Gilund. No detailed distribution map is yet available for this culture ;<sup>2</sup> but sites exist in the districts of Udaipur, Chitorgarh, Bhilwara and partly Mandasor, lying within the Mewar Residency of British India (Erskine 1903 : the attached map). The drainage system of this part of the country is formed by the Banas and her tributaries.

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1. This is also known as the Banas culture after the name of the main river of the area (Lal 1963 ; Thapar 1965 ; Agarwal 1966). Following the usual archaeological custom of naming a culture by the type site, we shall call it the Ahar culture throughout.

2. The preparation of this map is not possible for us either. The published reports seldom mention the latitude and longitude of the explored sites.

The culture itself is characterized by a number of wheel-made ceramic types, the chief among which is a plain and painted black-and-red ware, elaborate mud-and-mud-brick houses (including the rare use of burnt brick at Gilund), copper smelting indicated by copper axes, sheets and slags, microliths consisting of parallel sided blades and fluted cores,<sup>3</sup> and other cultural traits like terracotta beads or spindle whorls, terracotta gamesmen, cattle figurines etc. This seems to belong to what Braidwood (1960) characterizes as the 'expanded village-farming community level'. A number of C-14 tests places its chronological range between the mid-eighteenth and mid-thirteenth centuries B. C. (Lal 1963).

The Ahar culture is not known to have been preceded by any food-producing culture in south-eastern Rajputana. It seems to have appeared fully grown. Moreover, throughout its duration, there does not seem to have been any significant change in it either. Sankalia (1963a) divides it into three sub-phases, namely, A, B and C. But this division is not on the basis of any development of cultural traits but on the occurrence or absence of a few specific types of pottery. In sub-phase A there are a few sherds of thin buff and cream-or-white-slipped wares. These disappear in sub-phase B which has the 'stone ware', a new ceramic element. Sub-phase C possesses none of these, but it develops some features of its own in the black-and-red ware which, however, is the dominant ceramic in all the levels with a marked carination at the shoulder in the bowls and a painted chevron design. No such subdivision has been proposed for Gilund, but it has a few structural sub-periods.

A West Asiatic strain in this culture has been noticed by Sankalia (1963b). Two of its ceramic forms, namely, the dish-on-stand type with hollow stem in coarse grey ware and the dish-cum-bowl or 'chandelier' type with tapering column ending in bulbous base in sepia coloured ware have parallels in the two Persian sites of Hissar and Shah Tepe respectively.

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3. The microlithic element in the Ahar culture seems to be in doubt. Sankalia in 1961-62 did not find any microlith at Ahar, but microliths occur at Gilund and have been reported in 1955-56 from Ahar itself.



Besides, eight of the incised designs on the Ahar terracotta beads or spindle whorls, namely, chevrons, rows of arcs, zig-zag arches, stylized stag, etc. are comparable to those from Troy in Anatolia and Anau in Central Asia. Thapar (1965) adds to these the animal-handled lids from Ahar and the name of another Persian site, Geoy Tepe, which has comparable parallels.

The significance of this West Asiatic strain in Ahar culture has to be analysed. Sankalia (1963b) points out that the general date of the Persian pottery analogues goes back to about 3000 B.C., a date considerably earlier than the beginning of the Ahar culture. Any direct migration may thus be ruled out. Besides, sites like Hissar, Shah Tepe, Geoy Tepe, Troy and Anau, scattered in Persia, Anatolia and Central Asia do not belong to the same culture or even to the same period. Moreover, the suggested West Asiatic strain in the form of two or three ceramic shapes and a few incised designs on some terracotta beads does not seem to be a significant element in the total make up of the Ahar culture. In any case, this does not seem to be significant enough to explain its origin.

Agarwal (1966) suggests that Ahar culture originated with the employment of Harappan craftsmen by the intrusive West Asiatics. These West Asiatics, according to him, belong to the first wave of the Aryans in India, while the painted grey ware is supposed to belong to their second wave. Agarwal thus makes two postulates, namely, that a Harappan craftsmanship persisted in Ahar culture and that the presence of a West Asiatic strain indicates the coming of a new group of people. By identifying these new people as the first wave of the Aryans in India and suggesting that the painted grey ware represents the second wave, he apparently invokes the old linguistic hypothesis of Aryan migration into India in two waves. Besides, the idea of continuation of the Harappan technique in Ahar culture is an obvious attempt to establish a link between Harappan civilization and later Indian history.

The arguments adduced by Agarwal (1966) in favour of

his idea that Ahar culture was the result of the employment of Harappan craftsmen by Aryan West Asiatics are as follows :

- (a) The area covered by Ahar culture is geographically contiguous to the Harappan distribution zone.
- (b) The pottery traditions of the dish-on-stand in black-on-red, black-on-red, painted black-and-red and polychrome wares 'are known to and practised by the Harappans so far'.
- (c) Large burnt-brick structures, terracotta bulls and gamesmen from Gilund are supposed to have Harappan affinities. Even the two mounds of Gilund are thought to be reminiscent of the two mounds of Harappan cities.
- (d) The specific technique of inverted firing also might have been known to the Harappan potters. The implication is that the black-and-red ware of Ahar culture owes its origin to the Harappan knowledge of the technique.

To prove his point Agarwal further argues that the period IB at Desalpur in Kutch belongs to the Ahar culture.

Harappan culture may be geographically contiguous to the post-Harappan Ahar culture ; but that does not necessarily indicate that the technological tradition of the former was imbibed by the latter. The pottery traditions of the dish-on-stand in black-on-red, black-on-red, black-and-red and the polychrome wares which Agarwal refers to might have been known to and practised by the Harappans ; but there is in fact no objective basis to connect the Harappan types to the types of Ahar and Gilund. The dish-on-stand in black-on-red ware, after its discovery in the Pre-Harappan context at Kalibangan (IAR 1961-62) should no longer be considered as a typical Harappan object. The Harappan black-on-red ware too is quite distinctive in its fabric, the nature of the slip and painting seem to have nothing in common with the Ahar black-on-red except the general concept of black designs on a red surface. Harappan sites have not produced anything like the polychrome ware of Gilund (black, bright red and white on a red background) either.

The occurrence of black-and-red ware deserves more serious consideration. A black-and-red ware occurs in the Harappan context at Lothal and a few other sites in Gujarat (Rao 1963). But it is not yet clear if this variety was an organic part of the Gujarat Harappan ceramics or suggestive of a different cultural strain. It would perhaps be premature to argue at present that the Ahar black-and-red was derived from the black-and-red of the Gujarat Harappans.

The burnt-brick structure at Gilund referred to in Agarwal's third argument should not suggest anything more than social affluence. The existence of burnt bricks in an immediately post-Harappan horizon does not imply that the Harappans built them. Terracotta bulls of Gilund mentioned in this connexion, as the illustrations show (IAR 1959-60 : Pl. XLVA) are long bodied and long horned, and do not give the impression of being of Harappan workmanship and variety. The Gilund terracotta gamesmen too do not necessarily prove that there was culture contact between the Harappans and Ahar culture ; terracotta gamesmen tend to be similar everywhere, including later historical periods. Finally, the east and west mounds of Gilund, so far as they have been excavated, have revealed nothing even remotely Harappan in their lay out. It is therefore premature to claim, as Agarwal does, that the twin mounds of Gilund are reminiscent of the Harappan cities.

The contention that Desalpur 1 B belongs to Ahar culture, when examined in detail, does not seem to be convincing. According to Agarwal, the Harappan tradition of Desalpur 1 A continues in 1 B but it has been modified to suit some 'exotic tastes'. He cites in his favour a few changes in the ceramic tradition from periods 1 A to 1 B. The grey ware with bluish paintings of period 1 A is coarser and its designs become horizontal in period 1 B. Moreover, it is in period 1 B that new types like the cream-slipped bichrome, grey-painted black-and-red, white-painted black-and-red appear. According to Agarwal, all these variations denote a 'sudden change', a 'heavy borrowing' etc., to be explained only 'by the arrival of new

people who as they did not have a highly individualistic material culture of their own, employed the existing craftsmen'.

Desalpur (IAR 1963-64) in the coastal portion of Kutch is a fortified Harappan settlement with two sub-periods, A and B. The grey ware with bluish painting which occurs in sub-period A becomes coarser no doubt in sub-period B; but one fails to understand how the Ahar culture steps in here, as it does in Agarwal's argument. It is not also clear if the cream-slipped bichrome ware which appears in sub-period 1B is typical of Ahar culture. The cream-slipped bichrome variety is meagre both at Gilund and Ahar. At Gilund this occurs in the topmost level, while at Ahar only a few sherds have been reported. The painted black-and-red ware should however be analogous to the Ahar variety; but one wonders if this implies anything more than a contact between Desalpur 1B and Ahar culture.

On the other hand, typically Harappan dishes-on-stand, cylindrical perforated jars, carinated lids, goblets etc. persist through both the sub-periods of Desalpur 1, A and B. Harappan traits like triangular cakes, segmented faience beads, chert ribbon-flakes etc. which occur in 1A do not seem to have disappeared in 1B. Most significant of all, two inscribed seals, one in steatite and the other in copper, and an inscribed terracotta sealing were 'all available in the middle to upper levels of the Harappan culture proper' (IAR 1963-54).

There should, in fact, be little doubt about the Harappan character of Desalpur 1 B. Agarwal's idea that the new ceramic types in this period suggest a new dominant people employing the local Harappan craftsmen does not explain why these new people ('new masters' according to him) who could bring in three specialized ceramic types failed to bring any other trait of their material culture.

His second hypothesis that Ahar culture represents the first wave of the Aryans in India is essentially in line with Wheeler's suggestion (1959) that the painted grey ware users of the Gangetic Doab represent their second wave. Agarwal, we are afraid, misinterprets Piggott (1950) when he says that Piggott saw in the destroyers of Harappa and the builders of

the Moghul-Ghundai, Zangian, Jiwanri cemeteries two waves of the Aryans in the land. All that Piggott suggested in respect of these cemeteries was the infusion of a new people in the Makran coast in the post-Harappan age.

The theory of the two waves of the Aryan immigration in India is essentially based on philological evidence ; and if this view is to be utilized at all by archaeologists it should be seen if their data and arguments fit in with the philologists' views.

The theory of Hoernle (1880, 1904) and Grierson (1907) that the Aryans came to India in two waves is not accepted by all philologists, particularly by modern ones like Chatterjee and Katre (1966). Secondly, according to the Hoernle-Grierson concept, the Indo-European speakers now confined to the 'Outer Band' came first but were driven out subsequently into the territories they occupy at present by the second wave.

It may then be concluded that Agarwal and others in explaining archaeological cultures like the Ahar and the painted grey ware in terms of the two Aryan waves in India are trying to apply in archaeology a philological concept not accepted now by philologists themselves.

Even if we accept the Hoernle-Grierson theory, we find that the first wave of the Aryans settled first in the Gangetic Doab and later on being pressed by the second wave they moved over to outlying territories like Rajputana. Thus to justify the hypothesis that the Ahar culture of south-eastern Rajputana represents the first wave of Aryans in India, one has to prove that this culture was first in the Gangetic Doab and then spread over its present area. This does not seem to be possible on the basis of the present archaeological evidence.

The problem of the origin of the Ahar culture thus remains unsolved. Its West Asiatic contacts do not explain its origin, while Agarwal's hypothesis that it originated with the employment of the Harappan craftsmen by the first wave of Aryans in India is not convincing. The prehistoric sequence of south-eastern Rajputana is as yet little understood. But it should be obvious that the growth of expanded village-farming



communities like Ahar and Gilund<sup>4</sup> postulate an effective grip on the soil which could not possibly be attained within a short time. Emphasis should perhaps be placed on an understanding of this process of growth. Attempts to explain it by invoking West Asiatic contacts or Aryan immigration would only remain unconvincing.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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4. One feels that sites like Ahar and Gilund were almost on the threshold of urbanization which, however, was not ultimately achieved in this area due to the lack of suitable geographical opportunities.

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# OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY AND CLASS STRUCTURE

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*(Received on 6 December 1967)*

**Abstract:** The present paper is based on a study of six rural communities in Rajasthan.<sup>1</sup> The main purpose of the paper is to understand the nature of occupational mobility, both in historical and empirical contexts. The findings show that changes in occupational structure are followed by changes in class structure.

## *Introduction*

CHANGES in occupation may either bring one's class position down or elevate it higher, without any change in one's position in the caste system as the latter is determined by birth, endogamy, etc.

## *Changes in Traditional Callings*

For an understanding of occupational mobility, occupations have been classified into (1) traditional or caste-based : (a) pure and (b) impure ; and (2) non-caste.

The list of modern non-caste occupations (see Table 2)<sup>2</sup> shows that services (e.g., teaching, clerk or peon's work, military and police service) are more common among a number of castes.<sup>3</sup> There are exceptions, as a few Brahmins, Rajputs Baniyas also work as manual labourers for daily wage.<sup>4</sup> The other cases are also equally significant. One of the Brahmins has adopted tailoring in Harmara village. A Khatri (CARPENTER) in Sabalpura works as a goldsmith. A Brahmin in Murwara is a wine-contractor-cum-retail-trader. A few Brahmins and Rajputs are peons. A few Brahmins of Harmara run tea shops.

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Apparently, occupational mobility is being guided largely by the pressure of circumstances. Yet, none of the male workers of the twice-born and intermediate castes has taken up occupations like scavenging, shoe-making, even when available. But the Brahmins who run tea shops and who occasionally work as peons themselves clean utensils defiled by eating from them (*jutha*), which is considered a 'low' job. As opposed to this, some individuals of the lower castes (a CARPENTER, a POTTER, and a SHOE-MAKER) have become schoolmasters. Some Jats (peasants) have become schoolmasters, clerks, elected political leaders, joined the army and police, or become businessmen. One of the important reasons for such mobility was the abolition of the Jagirdari and the zemindary systems, due to which land-owning families were deprived of their land and had to seek other alternatives for living. These facts tend to show that change from caste-based to non-caste occupations is guided by available opportunity; it is partly also regulated by preferences and avoidances exercised by people seeking jobs.

∴ The distribution of 1900 male workers in 57 occupations according to caste groups and the way they have changed in 6 villages is given in Table 3.

The categories of caste-based and non-caste occupations can be abstracted from the list of occupations listed in the villages. The latter occupations form only 20 per cent of the total number of occupations of the total workers. These are 24 in number. About half of the total occupations are new to the village people, and are not guided by the principles of pollution-purity.

It should not be imagined that occupational mobility is confined to these 20 per cent of the workers and the other 80 per cent still keep to their traditional callings without any change. Some castes or some of their families who considered their own traditional callings as 'impure', discarded them and adopted either 'superior' traditional callings of other castes or non-caste jobs. The way in which mobility has been taking place from traditional to non-traditional, or from one traditional occupation to another is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 1

*Showing the distribution of traditional and new occupations according to the various caste categories*

<b>Caste</b>	<b>Traditional occupations and percentages</b>	<b>Non-caste jobs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Upper	203(54.0)	173(46.0)	376
Intermediate	751(88.4)	98(11.6)	849
Lower and Untouchables	519(90.7)	53( 9.3)	572
Muslims	50(48.5)	53(51.5)	103
Total	1523(80.1)	377(19.9)	1900(100.0)

Among upper castes and Muslims about 50 per cent of the workers are in secular jobs. Among the rest of the castes only 10 per cent are in secular jobs. This is due to the fact that Brahmins, Rajputs, and Muslims were zemindars, and the abolition of the zemindary system forced them to seek other jobs.

It is also obvious that in general the upper castes show more occupational mobility than other castes; as they have been affected relatively more by recent changes. Intermediate castes have taken up what the upper castes had to leave, for example, tenancy rights (ownership of land). Though the lower and untouchable castes have discarded some of their traditional callings, mobility in this group has been more on the social plane for an upgrading of rank rather than in respect of changed occupations.

### *Analysis*

The rate and pattern of mobility differ from caste to caste and family to family within a particular caste. For example, Brahmins, Rajputs and some lower castes who entirely depended upon rent from zemindary for their livelihood have been considerably disturbed by its abolition.

Brahmins and Rajputs were at the top of the social hierarchy, and therefore they have naturally tried to maintain their traditional status even under changed circumstances. They have therefore swarmed into prestigious jobs, or gone in for higher education, etc.

Occupational mobility has brought more changes in the class position of individuals and their families than in the position of their caste as a whole. For example, some of the Jat families in the villages under study have educated members who are white-collar workers or social or political leaders. They own *pucca* houses and enough cultivable land. They have developed more interaction with influential families of higher castes than with poor families of their own caste, which has remained, in status, what they were before.

Finally, the nature of occupational mobility also depends upon the nature of the village, as to whether it was a Jagirdari village or a zemindary one, or was situated on the fringe or near an urban centre, or whether it was a dry or a wet village, which affects the value of land. However, such an inquiry of the factors of occupational mobility is beyond the scope of the present paper.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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#### FOOTNOTES

1. The data incorporated in this paper are from six villages in the districts of Bharatpur, Jaipur and Sikar; two from each. The data were gathered from 1900 male workers belonging to 1160 households of 32 Hindu castes and 3 Muslim groups. The villages in Bharatpur are Murwara and Bawari, in Jaipur, Harmara and Bhutera, and in Sikar, Sabalpura and Roopgarh. All the villages are multi-caste.
2. The traditional callings of the various castes have been noted from the census reports up to 1931. It was a reality that upto 1931 in the six village communities of this study

the processes of change in regard to modern education, secular occupations, industrialization, and means of communication and transport did not take place. For example, not even a single man was educated up to High School level. There were no post offices, roads, buses, railways, newspapers, etc. available in these villages.

3. The new non-caste or secular occupations are work in road, railway, factory (power house, mills etc.) labour, school teaching, clerical jobs, police and army service, peon's or postal services, motor driving, *vaidya* (indigenous doctor), Panchayati Raj extension officer, forest officer, running tea and *pan*-shops, bicycle repairing, hair-cutting, etc.

TABLE 2

*Changes in the traditional callings of various caste groups*

	Traditional caste-based callings	Present occupations, caste-based or non-caste
<i>Upper Castes</i>		
1. Brahmin	Priesthood, worshipping teaching, cultivation.	Priesthood, white-collar jobs, cultivation, business, teaching, labour.
2. Rajput	Jagirdari and zemindary, police and military service.	Cultivation, police and military service, white-collar jobs (clerks, teachers), labour.
3. Bania	Money-lending, trading, shop-keeping etc.	Business, service, cultivation, poen.
<i>Intermediate Castes</i>		
4. Jat (zemindar)	Zemindary, cultivation.	Cultivation, labour, peon, police, military, shop-keeping.
5. Gujar (zemindar)	Zemindary, cultivation.	Cultivation, labour, peon.
6. Swami and Sanjogi	Priesthood, worshipping, zemindary.	Worshipping, begging, cultivation, labour.
7. Khatil	Carpentry ( <i>Jajmani</i> ).	Carpentry, cultivation, teacher.

	Traditional caste-based callings	Present occupations, caste-based or non-caste
8. Sonar	Goldsmithy.	Goldsmithy, service.
9. Darjee	Tailoring.	Cultivation, tailoring.
10. Jat (Tenants)	Cultivation, animal husbandry, labour.	Cultivation, animal husbandry, service (police, military, teaching).
11. Gujar (Tenants)	Herding, cultivation, labour.	Herding, cultivation, labour.
12. Mali	Gardening, cultivation.	Cultivation, labour.
13. Ahir	Cultivation, cow-herding.	Cultivation, animal husbandry, labour.
14. Kumhar	Pottery, masonry work, quarrying, cultivation.	Cultivation, pottery, masonry work, labour, quarrying.
<i>Labour</i>		
15. Gadaria	Cowherding.	Cultivation, labour, service.
16. Daroga	Domestic service of Rajputs.	Service, cultivation, labour.
17. Meena	Chowkidari, theft.	Cultivation, labour.
18. Vyas	Begging, worshiping.	Begging.
19. Nai	Hair-cutting, cleaning of defiled utensils, domestic services at birth, marriage, death and festivals.	Hair-cutting, cultivation, labour.
20. Jogi	Indigenous treatment of diseases, worshiping, expert in <i>Tantra</i> , begging.	Begging, cultivation, labour.
21. Dakot	Worshiping of 'Sanl Deva', low caste astrologer, begging.	Begging, <i>tonga</i> -driving.
22. Khatik	Butcher.	Butcher.
23. Rana	Singing, drum-beating.	Labour.
24. Dholi	Singing, drum-beating, begging.	Labour, service

	Traditional caste-based callings	Present occupations, caste-based or non-caste
25. Faqir	Begging.	Begging.
26. Dhadhi	Singing, drum-beating.	Singing, labour.
27. Bunkar	Weaving	Labour.
28. Bedia or Nat	Singing, dancing.	Singing, dancing, labour.
<i>Untouchables.</i>		
29. Balai	Carcass disposal, skinning, farm labour, mending of old shoes, etc.	Cultivation, labour.
30. Regar	Colouring of hides, shoe-making	Shoe-making, colouring of hides, repairing of old shoes and farm labour.
31. Naik	Basket-making, nursing.	Masonry work, cultivation, labour, basket-making.
32. Bhangl	Scavenging, basket-making.	Scavenging, basket-making, collection of animal bones, hunting.
<i>Muslim.</i>		
33. Luhar	Blacksmithy	Blacksmithy.
34. Manhar	Bangle-making.	Bangle-making, cultivation, silversmithy.
35. Mussalman (Khokhar, Pathan)	Zemindary, service (police and army)	Cultivation, service in police and army, labour, masonry work.

TABLE 3\*

*Present occupations of the upper, intermediate, lower and untouchable castes and Muslims.*

Occupations	Upper	Inter- mediate	Lower	Untouch- ables	Muslims	Total
1. Cultivation	98	598	24	76	19	815
2. Business and shop-keeping	52	9				61
3. Labour (Industrial)	14	26	10	10	1	61
4. Labour (manual and agricultural)	12	71	19	211	18	331

Occupations	Upper	Inter- mediate	Lower	Untouch- ables	Muslim	Total
5. Priest	31					31
6. School-teachers and clerks	38	10	1	1		50
7. Mangat	2	8	10			20
8. Carpenter		15				15
9. Patwari	4					4
10. Peon	4	7		1	3	15
11. Cook	5					5
12. Shop-accountant and assistant	52	2	2		1	57
13. Vaidya	6					6
14. Hair-cutter			25			25
15. Potter		10				10
16. Shoe-making and leather-work				101		101
17. Post-master	1					1
18. Vaccinator		2				2
19. Postman	1					1
20. Mason		16	1	18	4	39
21. Sweeper				13		13
22. Tailor	1	3		2		6
23. Wine-contractor	2					2
24. Tea-shop	8	3				11
25. Police and Military service	32	34	5	2	43	116
26. Railway class IV employees		2	12	3		17
27. Railway Inspector			1			1
28. Milk-selling	1	3	1			5
29. Co-operative Inspector		1				1
30. Conductor					2	2

Occupation	Upper	Inter- mediate	Lower	Untouch- ables	Muslim	Total
31. Domestic service		1		2		3
32. Compounder				1	1	2
33. Cleaner					1	1
34. Driver (Motor)	1	4		1	2	8
35. Laboratory Assistant	1					1
36. Goldsmithy		3				3
37. Forest officer	1					1
38. Progress Assistant	1					1
39. Village Level Worker	1	1				2
40. Khadi manager	1					1
41. Telephone operator	2		1			3
42. Bangle-maker					2	2
43. Silversmith					1	1
44. Animal husbandry		8		1		9
45. Oil-presser					1	1
46. Basket-making				3		3
47. Excise inspector		1				1
48. Panchayat inspector		1				1
49. Agricultural Extension Officer	1					1
50. Quarrying	2	6		6		14
51. Tonga driving			3			3
52. Meat-selling				2		2
53. Blacksmithy					4	4
54. Engineer	1					1
55. Cycle repairing		2				2
56. Hut-making		2				2
57. Weaving				3		3
Total	876	849	117	455	103	1900

\* Only male workers have been included in the list. Women and children generally help in certain agricultural operations, but they are not active earners.



# DOMB KINSHIP TERMS

D. V. RAGHAVA RAO

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**Abstract:** The paper, after enumerating the Domb kinship terms collected in the Araku Valley, Visakhapatnam district, A. P., analyses them on the basis of criteria of differentiation and classification. The majority of the terms are classificatory (27 out of 50), since they ignore criteria of differentiation. The criterion of collaterality is more often ignored than other criteria. The criteria of generation, sex and affinity are recognized with some exceptions in each case. Certain 'social equalizers' like patrilocal residence, patrilineal descent and similar norms of behaviour towards particular kins have resulted in the classificatory terminology existing in the society.

THE Dombs who are now popularly known as Valmikis, are one of the Scheduled Tribes living in the Agency areas of Andhra Pradesh. According to the 1961 census, their population is 22,354. They are chiefly concentrated in the Vishakhapatnam district (19,653) and are sparsely distributed in Srikakulam and East Godavari districts. The present data on Domb kinship were collected in the Araku Valley of Visakhapatnam Agency.

The Dombs of Araku Valley speak a corrupt form of Oriya, while some acculturated sections use Telugu also as a second language. Their main occupation is agriculture and that includes shifting or *Podu* and plough cultivation. Some of them are merchants, money-lenders and tom-tom beaters. Millet (*ragi*) forms their staple food. They generally eat beef, pork, the meat of rats and other animals. They occupy a very low status in the social hierarchy, as they trade in skins and hides. They live along with other tribal folk like the Bagata,

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Mukadora, Zodiya, Kondadora (Kubi), Khonds, etc. in multi-tribal villages. However, the Domb houses are grouped separately from those of others in a village.

The Dombs are divided into exogamous partilineal clans named after animals like the tiger, cobra, fish, etc. They have also partilineages. Residence is patrilocal. Though monogamy is predominant, polygynous families are not uncommon. Sororate and levirate are prevalent. Marriage by exchange and bilateral cross-cousin marriages are also common. Widow remarriage and divorce are permissible. Marriage by negotiation and by elopement are socially accepted forms of securing a mate.

In Domb society kin are addressed in three different ways : (1) some kin are addressed by personal name, especially when those addressed are younger than the speaker in age or generation, (2) most of the older kin are called by the kinship term itself, and (3) a few affinal kin are addressed by teck-nonymy as in the case of a wife referring to her husband as the father of her eldest son, and a husband addressing his wife as the mother of his eldest daughter.

The following list presents the kin terms, both denotative and classificatory :

**Ego's generation :**

- |                |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) Anna       | : B, FBZ, MSZ (older than ego)   |
| (2) Ninni-Anna | : B, FBZ, MSZ (younger than ego) |
| (3) Baye       | : S, FBD, MSD (older than ego)   |
| (4) Boni       | : S, FBD, MSD (younger than ego) |
| (5) Mena       | : MBZ, FSZ, SDZ                  |
| (6) Meni       | : MBD, FSD, SDD                  |
| (7) Sosra      | : H eld. B, W eld. B             |
| (8) Devur      | : H you. B                       |
| (9) Salla      | : W you. B                       |
| (10) Salli     | : H you. S, W you. S             |
| (11) Sassu     | : H eld. S, W eld. S             |
| (12) Somdi     | : ZWF, DHF                       |
| (13) Somdoni   | : ZWM, DHM                       |
| (14) Saddu     | : WSH                            |
| (15) Santani   | : Co-wife                        |
| (16) Batoo     | : Eld. SH                        |

	(17) Munos	: H
	(18) Meyze	: W
	(19) Devrani	: H you. BW
	(20) Zatani	: H eld. BW
	(21) Bauv	: Eld. BW
Transcending	(22) Buvvari	: You. BW, ZW
generations	(23) Zuvali	: You. SH, DH

**First ascending generation**

	(24) Abba	: F, FB, MSH
	(25) Mama	: WF, HF, FSH, MB
Transcending	(26) Ayya	: M, MS, FBW, FFM
generations	(27) Atta	: FS, MBW, WM, HM, MFM

**Second ascending generation :**

	(28) Amma	: FM
	(29) Anni-Baye	: FF
	(30) Dada	: MF
	(31) Dokni-Baye	: MM

**Third ascending generation**

	(32) Goggo	: MFF
	(33) Appi	: FFF
	(34) Bodaye	: MMM

**Fourth ascending generation**

	(35) Mallo	: MFFF
	(36) Azzo	: FFFF

**First descending generation**

	(37) Po	: Z, BZ, WSZ, HBZ
	(38) Gi	: D, BD, WSD, HBD
	(39) Banza	: HSZ, BZ(WS), WBZ, SZ(MS)
	(40) Banzi	: HSD, BD(WS), WBD, SD(MS)

**Second descending generation**

	(41) Ponatti	: ZZ, ZD
	(42) Ginatti	: DZ, DD

**Third descending generation**

	(43) Putti	: ZZZ, DDD, ZZD, ZDZ, ZDD
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**Fourth descending generation**

(44) Titti : ZZZZ, DDDD, ZZZD, DDDZ

**Fifth descending generation**

(45) Satti : ZZZZZ, DDDDD

**Sixth descending generation**

(46) Atti : ZZZZZZ, DDDDDDD

Besides, there are four purely descriptive kin terms in Domb nomenclature which combine two elementary terms to denote a specific relative. Thus the descriptive term 'Sosra-Boni' combines two elementary kin terms to denote a specific relative, wife's elder brother's wife. Thus :—

- (1) Sosra-Boni—W eld. BW
- (2) Salla-Boni—W you. BW
- (3) Sassu-Baye—H eld. SH
- (4) Salli-Baye—H you. SH.

There are 50 kin terms in the Domb kinship system of which 27 are classificatory and the rest denotative. One classificatory term (Atta) in the first ascending generation and four terms (Putti, Titti, Satti and Atti) below the second descending generation embrace nearly five types of kinship each, while 9 classificatory terms include only two types of kinship each. 8 classificatory terms include four types of relationship each, while 5 terms include only three types of kin ties in each case. The 23 denotative terms express only one kind of relationship, each subject to the condition of the equality of siblings of the same sex.

**Generation :** There are 25 kin terms in the ego's own generation, 2 terms in the first ascending generation, 4 terms in the second ascending generation and 3 and 2 terms in each of the third and fourth ascending generation respectively. There are 4 kin terms in the first descending generation, 2 kin terms in the second descending generation and 1 kin term in each of the third, fourth and sixth descending generations. Besides, there are 4 terms in the Domb nomenclature which ignore the principle of generation.

### *Criteria of Differentiation*

The kin are terminologically distinguished from one another on the basis of the following criteria.

**Sex differentiation :** The Domb nomenclature gives extensive recognition to the criterion of sex. Different terms are used to denote kin of different sexes who are otherwise related in the same way. However, the criterion is neglected in some kin terms of the ego's own generation. Thus, descriptive terms like 'Sassu-Baye' and 'Salli-Baye' denote H eld. SH and H you. SH respectively. These terms are compounded of two elementary kin terms in each case—Sassu + Baye, Salli + Baye. The term 'Baye' generally means 'elder sister' ; but the above descriptive terms with the term '—Baye' denote male kin. The sex difference is also ignored in the case of relatives beyond the first descending generation as noted below.

Ponatti	:	ZZ, ZD
Ginatti	:	DZ, DD
Putti	:	ZZZ, DDD
Titti	:	ZZZZ, DDDD
Satti	:	ZZZZZ, DDDDD
Atti	:	ZZZZZZ, DDDDDD

The principle is also ignored by one kin term 'Anni-Baye' (FF) in the second ascending generation.

**Age differentiation :** Siblings are terminologically differentiated from one another on the basis of their relative age. Thus an older brother is referred to as 'Anna' while a younger brother is called 'Nanni-Anni', literally meaning 'little brother.' Similarly elder sister (Baye) is terminologically differentiated from the younger sister (Boni).

**Criterion of polarity :** The principle of polarity is recognized throughout by the kinship system except in two relationships. Thus son's father-in-law and daughter's father-in-law use the same classificatory term, 'Somdi', in referring to each other. Similarly, the kin term, 'Somdoni', refers to both son's mother-in-law and daughter's mother-in-law. Here each relationship

is taken as a unit and both participants apply the same classificatory term to each other.

**Criterion of affinity :** The kin nomenclature in Domb society makes a terminological distinction between consanguineal and affinal kin. However, the phenomenon is ignored in the following instances :

- |           |   |                   |
|-----------|---|-------------------|
| (1) Atta  | : | FS, WM and MBW    |
| (2) Abba  | : | F and WMB         |
| (3) Ayya  | : | M and FBW         |
| (4) Putti | : | ZZZ and DDD       |
| (5) Titti | : | ZZZZ and DDDD     |
| (6) Satti | : | ZZZZZ and DDDDD   |
| (7) Atti  | : | ZZZZZZ and DDDDDD |

**Criterion of generation :** The generation principle is recognized in Domb kinship system except in the following instances :

- |            |   |                |
|------------|---|----------------|
| (1) Zuvaii | : | You. SH and DH |
| (2) Buvari | : | You. BW and ZW |
| (3) Atta   | : | FS and MFM     |
| (4) Ayya   | : | M and FFM      |

**Criterion of bifurcation :** This criterion is recognized in the following terms :

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| FF—Anni-Baye ;  | MF—Dada    |
| MM—Dokri-Baye ; | FM—Amma    |
| ZZ—Ponatti ;    | DZ—Ginatti |
| FB—Abba ;       | MB—Mama    |
| BD—Gi ;         | SD—Banzi.  |

The principle of bifurcation is ignored in the following kin terms applicable beyond the second descending generation :

- |                         |
|-------------------------|
| Putti—ZZZ and DDD       |
| Titti—ZZZZ and DDDD     |
| Satti—ZZZZZ and DDDDD   |
| Atti—ZZZZZZ and DDDDDD. |

Domb kinship nomenclature gives extensive recognition to the criterion of polarity, bifurcation and relative age, while the

criteria of generation, sex and affinity are recognized with a number of exceptions in each case. But the criteria of collaterality, decadence and speaker's sex are completely ignored in the kin nomenclature. That is why, we find many classificatory terms in the kinship system.

### *Criteria of Classification*

The nomenclature equates the laterals of the same sex connected by affinal kin in the same generation. Thus the wife's elder sister and the husband's elder sister are denoted by a single classificatory term, 'Sassu', while wife's younger sister and husband's younger sister are called by a distinct classificatory term, 'Salli'. The same type of behaviour is projected towards the kin included under the term 'Sassu' which is based on restraint and reservedness. A relationship of familiarity and joking is projected in the case of kin included under the kin term 'Salli'. The same terminological equation is found in the case of husband's elder brother and wife's elder brother who are denoted by a single classificatory term, 'Sosra'. Both the kin included in the term 'Sosra' have a special status by virtue of their seniority over the connecting relative in each case, and are hence respected. A high degree of respect and reservedness is observed in the behaviour of a woman towards her husband's elder brother which verges on avoidance.

Domb nomenclature, however, does not equate the wife's younger brother 'Salla' and husband's younger brother 'Devur'. Unlike their senior counterparts they are terminologically distinguished from one another and denoted by two distinct terms.

Son's wife (Buvvari) in the first descending generation is terminologically equated with the younger brother's wife in the ego's own generation, ignoring the criterion of generation. A father-in-law is expected to be on terms of restraint and reservedness with his daughter-in-law (son's wife). The relationship between them is one of avoidance. The same behaviour is expected of a man towards his younger brother's



wife. That is why the son's wife in the first descending generation and younger brother's wife in the ego's own generation are denoted by a single classificatory term (Buvai). Similarly, younger sister's husband in the ego's own generation, and daughter's husband in the first descending generation are terminologically equated in a single classificatory term, 'Zuvaii'. The attitude towards them is the same.

Parents-in-law are terminologically classed with the parents of cross-cousins. Thus the father-in-law, mother's brother, father's sister's husband are denoted by a single classificatory term 'Mama', while mother-in-law, mother's brother's wife and father's sister are denoted by another classificatory term, 'Atta'.

On the basis of terms used for parents and their siblings, the Domb kinship terminology can be regarded as being of the 'Bifurcate Merging' type, which ignores the principle of collaterality in which the mother's sister is terminologically equated with the mother, father's brother with father, brother's son with son and brother's daughter with daughter. In ego's generation the siblings and parallel cousins are terminologically grouped together and the cross-cousins are distinguished from them.

This terminology reveals the influence of patrilineal rule of descent, patrilocal residence and sororal polygyny. The father's brother is terminologically equated with the father; hence the latter's wife with that of the former. In a patri-clan and patri-lineage, every male member of the father's generation is recognized as brother of one's own father who is simply addressed and referred to as 'Abba', meaning 'father'. Similarly their wives are referred to as 'Ayya'. Patrilocal residence brings all the spouses of a father and his male siblings into proximity with one another by acting as a 'social equalizer'. However a 'father' is distinguished from his male siblings by the use of certain prefixes. Thus father's elder brother is called 'Bod-Abba', while father's younger brother is known as 'San-Abba' or 'Ninni-Abba', meaning 'little father'. Similarly each of the mothers has a



qualifying derivative term which is determined by the seniority of the mother. Thus the elder sister of mother is referred to as 'Bod-Ayya' whereas the mother's younger sister is called 'San-Ayya', literally meaning 'little mother'. Reciprocally, all the children born of the same polygynous union and siblings of the male sex are addressed as well as referred to by all mothers in the same way as they do with their own children. The same principle is extended even to son's spouses. Thus the son's wife and son's progeny are not terminologically distinguished from those of step-sons.

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# SOME ASPECTS OF MARRIAGE AMONG THE LINGAYATS

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**Abstract.** Marriage among the Lingayats is still largely controlled by tradition. In mate selection, rules of subcaste endogamy and hypergamy continue to be observed. Preferential kin marriage is a characteristic feature among them. Choice of mates is the responsibility of parents and the kin group, since marriage is considered as a union of two families and kin groups rather than merely a union between two individuals. The age at first marriage of girls in a large majority of cases is below the minimum fixed by the Hindu Marriage Act. Since there is no territorial exogamy, the majority of affinal links have been circumscribed within a radius of five miles. A high frequency of inter-kin marriage within the limited territory renew and strengthen bonds of kinship and prevent further geographical expansion of marital ties. The data demonstrate the significant correlation between the mode of mate selection and the age at marriage, which in turn determine the geographical propinquity of marital relationships.

## *Introduction*

THE Lingayats who constitute a significant section of the population play an important role in the economic, political, educational and cultural life of Mysore State. Although Lingayatism differs from Hinduism in theory, Lingayats at the present time have in practice taken over many of the aspects of Hinduism against which they originally revolted. Lingayatism, although in principle opposed to caste, has itself become a caste in Hindu society. Max Weber<sup>1</sup> and Hutton<sup>2</sup> said that the Lingayats are the example *par*

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*excellence* of a religious group becoming a caste. William McCormack<sup>3</sup> considers the Lingayats, in the modern interactional framework of caste relations, as a caste. Among the Lingayats of Kalyan (pseudonym), a suburban fringe community of Dharwar city, there are ten endogamous subcastes hierarchically arranged amongst themselves. Rules of caste and subcaste endogamy and hypergamy are followed rigidly. Traditionally, the Lingayats are farmers and traders in the main, though each subcaste is further associated with an occupation of its own.

Among the Lingayats each subcaste is endogamous for all practical purposes and it is further subdivided into various exogamous groups<sup>4</sup> known as 'Bedagu' or 'Bagi' which in turn may be further subdivided into several 'Vamsha' or lineages. A Lingayat is not expected to marry within his own Bedagu or Bagi and a marriage between persons of the same patrilineage is prohibited. Each Bedagu bears a distinct name which either indicates a sage of the ancient times or is totemic in character and functions as an exogamous clan. All persons within the same Bedagu have the belief that they are descended from the same ancestor and hence avoid marital alliances.

The Lingayats consider marriage as a normal duty of every adult of marriageable age. It is rather difficult for them to conceive of any one voluntarily abstaining from marriage throughout life. Marriages are arranged by parents and elders of the kin group.

### *Mate Selection*

For the selection of a mate, the real unit of endogamy according to traditional practice is not the caste but the subcaste. Moreover, factors such as socio-economic status of the potential spouse's family and kin group, language, region, occupation, customs and manners are also taken into consideration. Normally class endogamy and hypergamy prevail in the mosaic of caste structure.

The marriage of parallel cousins is prohibited, and marriage of cross-cousins allowed. A man is obliged or even has a special right to marry his mother's brother's daughter or father's sister's daughter or his elder sister's daughter. Marriages among preferential kin are characteristic of the Lingayats.

In the selection of a bride, the first consideration is the social status and economic condition of the bride's family. Besides the traditions of the family, it is her character, age, health and her possible adjustability to the new household which are of prime importance. In selecting a bridegroom, the social and economic status of the groom's family, health and industriousness are usually the factors taken into consideration. An astrologer is also consulted for the compatibility of stars. Thereafter the engagement ceremony takes place at the bride's residence.

Although the majority of respondents feel that elders should take the responsibility of marriage of children, a few youngsters influenced by modern ideas believe that the personal choice of mates is better. The consensus is that in matters of marital alliance the parents should approve of the family of the bride and the boy should approve of the girl. This idea itself seems to be a comparatively radical one. The modern youths of Kalyan have yet to reach a stage when they can concede the need of the girl's approval of the boy.

### *Age at Marriage*

An analysis of 303 marriages in Kalyan indicates that in the case of 80.53% the woman's age at first marriage was below 15 years, and in the case of hardly 19.47% marriages, females at their first marriage were 15 years and above. However, the age at first marriage of males in 81.52% of the cases was 18 years and above, and in the case of only 18.48% it was below 18 years.

A study of the age at first marriage of females gives a glimpse of the changing age at first marriage in different age groups.

TABLE 1

*Age at first marriage of females*

<b>Present age of females</b>	<b>Below 13</b>	<b>13-15</b>	<b>16-20</b>	<b>Total</b>
35 and above	53	23	10	86
24-34	48	20	20	88
14-23	33	20	24	77
Below 14	11	x	x	11
Total	140	63	54	257

From the table it is clear that among all age groups the number of marriages is maximum for females below 13 years of age. However, it is significant that such marriages are maximum among women who are now 35 and above. In the age groups 24-34 and 14-23 and among girls below 14, the marriages that took place when they were below 13 years were mostly inter-kin marriages. In the majority of cases, since a mate is chosen from among the group of preferred kin, the formal wedding takes place at an early age even though the girl is usually sent to her husband's home within one year after she attains puberty. Normally girls attain maturity between 13-14 and by 15 or so they join their husbands.

The number of marriages of females below 13 is decreasing in 24-34 and 14-23 age groups. But the number of marriages of females between 16-20 years in the younger generation (24-34 and 23 and below age groups) has been significantly on the increase. In the age group below 14, out of the 11 marriages that took place when girls were below 13 years, 8 of them were marriages among preferential kin.

The foregoing data suggests that pre-puberty marriages have been characteristic of the Lingayats of Kalyan. This phenomenon is closely related to a high frequency of preferential kin marriages. An analysis of a total of 303 marriages revealed that about 40% of them are kin marriages. Of the preferential kin marriages, the breakdown shows 53.39 per cent constituted cross-cousin marriages. Matrilateral cross-cousin

marriages predominate (32.20%) over patrilateral cross-cousin marriages (21.19%). Other types of kin marriages amount to 7.63 per cent. In the case of 13.56 per cent of kin marriages recorded in the genealogies as stated by the respondents exact relationship of the parties to the union prior to their marriage was not traceable. It is relevant to note that in Kalyan during the last half a century or so, the proportion of kin marriages has been more or less the same through the generations.

There is a slow and steady trend towards the postponement of the age at marriage of girls. This is the situation prevailing in the Hindu community today and it is likely to worsen.<sup>5</sup> But the social situation among the Lingayats of Kalyan has not worsened with regard to the selection of grooms. Out of 303 marriages analysed, in 80.53% of the cases, girls were married when they were below 15 years. Only 19.47% of the girls were above 15 when married. The very fact that practically all these marriages took place within one's subcaste indicates that even now finding a partner for the girl in the same subcaste has not been difficult in this community. In fact pre-puberty engagements and weddings have been quite common.

The average age at first marriage of females for all age groups is 12.0 years. However, in different age groups the average age at first marriage of females has been slowly on the increase as indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2

*Average age at first marriage of females.*

<b>Present age of females</b>	<b>Average age at first marriage</b>
35 and above	11.2
24-34	12.1
14-23	13.0
Total	12.0

On the other hand, the average age at first marriage of males has been 20.0 years consistently in the different age groups. This suggests that men have been marrying almost at the same age in the last two or three generations.

### *Difference in Age between Spouses*

Not only the age at which men and women marry but also the difference in age between husband and wife is important in determining their relationship.<sup>8</sup> In Kalyan the average difference in age between husband and wife at first marriage for all age groups is 8.00 years. But in different age groups the average difference in age between husband and wife is becoming slightly less.

TABLE 3

*Difference in age between husband and wife at first marriage*

Present age of females	Average age difference
35 and above	8.2
24-34	8.2
14-23	7.8
Below 14	7.0
Total	8.0

Taking into account the averages of actual age at marriage and the age difference between husband and wife at first marriage the analysis of the respondent's opinion about the ideal age for marriage of females and males can be made.

TABLE 4

*Ideal age for marriage of females and males*

Respondent's age	Average ideal age for females	Average ideal age for males
35 and above	14.0	21.0
24-34	15.0	23.0
20-23	15.0	25.0
Total	14.0	22.0



Although the people of Kalyan think that the ideal age for marriage of girls and boys should be 14 and 22 respectively, the data at our disposal make it clear that in reality they marry two years earlier. Interestingly enough, even though the average ideal age difference in the younger generation is slightly more than in the older generation, the average ideal age difference between husband and wife for all age groups exactly coincides with the actual age difference (i. e. 8.0 years) between spouses.

### *Propinquity*

In the matrimonial relationship, the manifestation of narrow geographical distance is a remarkable feature of Kalyan community. The analysis of 303 marriages presents an interesting pattern of spatial distribution of affinal links.

TABLE 5

*Geographical distribution of marital ties  
according to administrative units*

No. of marriage	Kalyan	Dharwar city	Dharwar taluk and district	Outside district	Outside state
303	120	49	85	48	1
100.00	39.61	16.17	28.05	15.84	0.33

Since there is no village or territorial exogamy, more than half of the marriages have been contracted with spouses coming from the same suburb or the same city. The frequency of marriages having a partner from within Dharwar taluk and district comes after that wherein more spouses come from within a radius of 5 to 15 miles. A relatively smaller number of marital links are found outside Dharwar district. There is a single instance of marriage in which the partner comes from outside Mysore State.

The absence of territorial and Bedagu exogamy, easy availability of mates from the same subcaste, physical proximity

and knowledge of family background of each other, possibility of personal visits and mutual aid among kin, and preference for inter-kin marriage, suspicion and fear of conflicts in having marital links with unknown people of differing socio-economic backgrounds living in far-off places, have provided limited latitude in matters of selection of mates to within a short distance.

Girls whose natal home is in Kalyan are given in marriage to different places. In the case of 87 such marriages recorded, the maximum number of marriages are within a radius of 15 miles, followed next by marriages which have taken place in Dharwar itself.

TABLE 6

*Girls go as wives from Kalyan*

No. of marriages	Dharwar	Distance in miles, radius			
		15	30	60	120
87	24	41	19	2	1

Significantly, marriages within a radius of 60 and 120 miles are very few indeed. In these 87 marriages, girls of Kalyan, besides marrying in the same city, have gone as wives to 53 different villages, towns and cities, the average distance being 22.6 miles.

The same order of frequency can be observed in 166 marriages wherein girls have come as wives from 64 different villages, towns, and cities, besides coming from Dharwar itself.

TABLE 7

*Girls come as wives to Kalyan*

No. of marriages	Dharwar	Distance in miles, radius			
		15	30	60	120
166	56	64	26	16	4

The average distance from which girls come as wives to Kalyan is 38.9 miles. There seems to be an appreciable distinction among the people of Kalyan in their wife-giving and wife-receiving activities. The figures show a trend towards giving wives to places nearer than the places from which they receive wives.

### Conclusion

The affinal links of Kalyan stretch out in most of the cases from 15 miles to a maximum of 60 miles. That also indicates to a certain extent the geographical distribution of subcaste membership within the region. Moreover, the greater frequency of inter-kin marriages within the existing limited territory renew and strengthen bonds of kinship, thereby preventing further geographical expansion of marital ties. The foregoing analysis demonstrates the significant relationship that exists between the mode of mate selection and the age at marriage. These factors in turn determine the territorial limits within which marital relationships are confined.

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# CASTE AND MUSLIM PEASANTRY IN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

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**Abstract.** The author describes a feature of Muslim society in India and Pakistan which resembles very closely the caste system of the Hindus. He also tries to find an answer to the question, why it is so. Class difference based on birth and wealth are also described.

**P**OPULAR belief holds that the caste system and Islamic religion are diametrically opposed. The egalitarian atmosphere of Islam would seem to preclude the existence of a caste system, and, given the tremendous social mobility in Islamic societies, a caste complex could not flourish. Although these assumptions are theoretically valid, in practice, the steady growth of the caste concept is evident throughout Islamic society. It is a fact that the caste system in Islamic societies has never reached the extremes of the Hindu caste system. Nevertheless, it has been observed that in the Twenty-four Parganas (West Bengal, India) the Muslim landlords and the Muslim peasants have a well-defined and a somewhat rigid class stratification which does indeed merit its comparison with the Hindu caste system. The same is true of the Muslim peasant communities of Dacca, Faridpur and Noakhali in East Pakistan, and Gujranwala and Sialkot in West Pakistan.

This paper will attempt an evaluation of the Hindu caste concept as it influenced the structural design of the Muslim

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This paper is partly based on the data from the author's fieldwork in India (West Bengal, 24 Parganas), East Pakistan (Bhandarika village, Madaripur Sub-division, Faridpur district) and West Pakistan (Lahore and Sialkot).

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peasantries of India and Pakistan. One qualification attends this effort. It must be recognized that the Muslim peasantry of countries such as Lebanon and Turkey, where the Hindu caste concept had no appreciable influence, do maintain a rigid social stratification.

While in theory Islam professes man's equality, a dichotomy between the slave and the free-born has existed since the earliest days of Islam. Among the free-born there exists another distinction between the descendents of the prophet (people belonging to the leading tribes, i.e. Quaraish, Arab Muslims, non-Arab Muslims), and people of other religions living in the Muslim world. Considerable class mobility was present among the upper classes, but movement between upper and lower classes was negligible. Only the skeleton of the theory of class mobility and equality was preserved in tact. Finally, with new conquests and subsequent social stratification, class mobility became a myth.

At this point it seems in order to delineate those theoretical principles of Islam which are commonly held by Muslim peasantries of the countries studied.

An ardent belief in the five pillars of Islam, namely *Roza*, *Namaz*, *Haj*, *Zakat*, and *Kalema*,<sup>1</sup> is not only shared by the Muslim peasantries of the Indo-Pak subcontinent but by those of other countries throughout the world. These precepts include no overt reference to the equality or inequality of classes. However, the implication of *Zakat* is that difference between social groups exists; but this difference is of an economic nature. The cardinal idea of the institution of *Zakat* is to strike a balance between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

Economic differences which tend to create social differences do not necessarily signal caste differences. However, when birth and lineage co-operate to strengthen social discrimination, rigid class distinctions evolve. This is most pronounced in peasant societies where traditional values are deep-seated. The resultant rigidly stratified class system thus puts an end

to social mobility. At this stage an otherwise naturally occurring socio-economic difference becomes a caste difference.

Until India won independence from British rule, the Muslim and the Hindu peasants remained comparatively isolated in a world of their own. The Hindu peasants followed the ancient system of caste. The Muslim peasants obeyed the instructions of the Quran and Hadith as interpreted (or mis-interpreted) by the Mulla class.

The Mulla class in the rural areas has always been a part of the Muslim peasantry of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. This class consists of half-educated priests who occupy the upper stratum of the peasant social structure. Theoretically, however, the peasant landlords were at the apex of the Muslim peasant's social pyramid, but practically, they were more of a part of the urban society. Most of the Muslim peasant landlords lived in the cities and left the management of their estates and the collection of revenue to the Nayebs and Gumastas.<sup>1</sup>

The managerial class of Nayebs and Gumastas occupied the second stratum of the peasant social structure. At times they exerted great influence on the peasant society through their use of force. Force was applied whenever peasant landholder, *Rayat*, defaulted payment; but it was usually convenient to persuade rather than to coerce him. For the former course of action the managerial class had to depend on the Mullas to persuade the defaulter to pay the arrears in land revenue. In fear of adverse *Fatwa* (sermon after the Jumma or Friday prayer) the defaulters usually abided by the Mulla's orders and paid the overdue rents.

The cultivator peasants themselves were divided into two classes—the property holders (*Rayats*), and the labourers (*Kamlas*). The fishermen, oil pressers, weavers, grocers, blacksmiths, and potters<sup>2</sup> comprised the lowest class of the peasant social hierarchy.

Though Islamic doctrine dictates against attaching social stigma to a particular class, the Muslim peasant of West Bengal and East Pakistan attach definite social stigma to the occupational groups. This stigma stems from the fact that the majority of the landlords were caste Hindus and the peasants

were *Muslims*. Many of them, especially those belonging to the occupational groups, were Namahsudras, Scheduled Caste Hindus, before they became Muslim. So these converts were looked down upon by higher caste Hindus. It is interesting to note that these converts were viewed with almost equal disdain by other Muslim peasants who belonged to higher castes before they were converted to Islam.

In Bagerhat of the Twenty-four Parganas, India, and Sylhet in East Pakistan, this class difference between the occupational peasant groups and the landholding peasant group became a caste difference. The same kind of caste difference existed between the few Muslim landlords and their landholding tenants.

In a study of caste influence of the Muslim peasantry of Twenty-four Parganas it has been reported that marriage between members of different peasant classes is not recognized by the total peasant society.<sup>4</sup> Transgression of this improvised caste rule occurred very rarely, but when it did, the transgressors were made to abandon the peasant area (a village or cluster of villages).

Likewise, in the Sylhet and Faridpur districts of East Pakistan, the social stratification among the peasants is so rigid that the mere idea of a marital possibility between a member of the Ashraf (gentleman-peasant landlord) and a member of the Arzal (lowest class of occupational groups among the peasants) would be considered blasphemous. Even a marriage between the Ashraf group and the Atraf (ordinary) group is not acceptable by the peasant society.

As among the Hindu peasants of North India,<sup>5</sup> the Muslim peasants of India and Pakistan witness upward movement through the acquisition of arable land. The final move to a higher class takes place when a rich peasant succeeds in establishing marital connexion with a higher class peasant family whose financial stature has been diminished and who is in need of assistance.

The progression from one class to another among the Muslim peasants of West Bengal and East Pakistan is a difficult one. An example will illustrate the difficulty of



this class transfer. Bhandarikandi is a village<sup>6</sup> in the district of Faridpur, East Pakistan. The Dhalis<sup>7</sup> are the richest peasant group in the village. They control almost half of the arable land and about thirty *hazar-mani-nau* (50-ton boats). But the stigma of an occupational group remains attached to their family name, which makes it very difficult for them to have marital relationships with Khonkars<sup>8</sup> and Sheikhs.<sup>9</sup> About ten years ago one of the Khonkar peasant families of the village found himself in financial difficulty. The Dhalis agreed to help the particular Khonkar family on condition that one of the sons of the Khonkar family would marry a Dhali daughter.

*Physical basis of caste-class differentiation in India and Pakistan*

Hindu caste classification	Muslim equivalents	Functional role	Physical characteristics*
<i>Brahman</i> (Descendants of the Vedic priests)	<i>Syed</i> (Descendants of Mohammad)	Priests, land-holders (zamindars) and intellectuals (Professional people).	Colour : fair South Italian skin. Stature : 5'8" Facial : thin lips, narrow nose Hair : straight
<i>Kshatriya</i> (Descendants of the Vedic warriors)	<i>Quaraishi, Sheikhs</i> (Related to the Quaraish tribe)	Landholders, public officials, soldiers	Colour : fair, little darker than Brahmans Stature : 5'8" Facial : Brahman lips, broader nose Hair : slightly wavy
<i>Vaisya</i> (Descendants of the Vedic merchants and traders)	<i>Pathan, Moghul</i> (Descendants of the Afghan and Moghul settlers)	Public officials, soldiers, traders, cultivators	Colour : fair (shade darker than Kshatriya) Stature : 5'6" Facial : Broad lips and nose Hair : wavy
<i>Sudra</i> (Descendants of the Vedic servants and landless cultivators)	Muslim converts from Hinduism esp. from the lowest classes. Jola (weavers) Hazam (barbers also circumcise), bread-makers.	Petty businessmen, occupational groups, such as fishermen, weavers, oilpressers, and bread-makers	Colour : dark Stature : 5'2" Facial : thick lips and widespread nose Hair : very wavy
<i>Mlechhas-Untouchables</i> (Descendants of the Barbarians of the Vedic Era)	<i>Mehtar</i> (Latrine cleaners)	Most unclean occupational groups such as butchers, cleaners of animal inside and latrines, Chandal (burners of the dead)	Colour : very dark Stature : 5'2" Facial : thick lips and widespread nose Hair : very wavy

\* It is difficult to accept the neat physical distinctions in column 4. There seems to be some amount of over-emphasis on differences; particularly with regard to stature and hair,—Editor.

*Cultural and economic basis of caste-class differentiation*

Hindu caste	Muslim classes	Cultural effectants of physical difference	Economic exaggeration of cultural differences
Brahman	Syed	Attire : Pressed Dhuti (Hindu) and Sherwani (Muslim) Education : (Secondary and college level), (adept in political functions) Taboo against inter-marriage (Hindu) ; restrictions against inter-marriage (Muslim) Language : (Chaste)	Respectable economic functions : Landlordism, legal and medical professions, and administrative positions. Food habits : Milk, butter, ghee, vegetables, and meat (Muslim) and rice
Kshatriya	Quaraisli	Attire : Clean Dhuti (Hindu) and Lungi-Kurta (Muslim) Education : (Secondary and college level) Taboo against inter-marriage (marriage with higher class member permitted) Language : Chaste	Respectable economic functions : Landlordism, legal, medical and administrative professions. Primarily food consumers and producers Food habits : Meat, ghee, butter, milk and vegetables
Valaya	Pathan Moghul	Attire : Clean Dhuti (Hindu) and Lungi-Kurta (Muslim) Minimum education. Taboo against marriage with only Sudra and Mlechhas Language (mostly dialect)	Respectable economic functions : trade, commerce, industry, and (at times) legal-medical professions, Primarily food producers but also important consumers. Food habits : Milk, butter, mustard oil, meat, vegetables, and rice
Sudra	Converted Muslims : Munshi, Biswas, Darji	Attire : Short Dhuti or Lungi Minimum Education level Marriage taboo with Mlechhas and Mehtars Language : Dialect	Economic functions : Landless cultivators and small shopkeepers. Primarily producers of food. Food habits : Rice, vegetables, fish, meat
Mlechcha	Mehtar	Attire : Very short Dhuti or Lungi (no shirt or Kurta) Completely illiterate. No marriage taboo (incest taboo as usual). Dialect (usually a combination of the dialects spoken and understood by upper classes)	Economic functions : Scavengers (cleaners, sweepers, pig raisers) Primary food habits : Rice, meat, intestines and illegally brewed liquors, vegetables. Primarily food consumers

*Caste-class in Bhandari Kandi**( A village in East Pakistan )*

Population : 5,000      Area : 8 sq. mi.

Hindu caste	Muslim class	Cultural characteristics	Physical characteristics
No Brahman	No Syed	.....	.....
<i>Kshatriya</i> (One joint family has about 25 members) Surname : Ray	<i>Sheikh</i> (One joint family has about 35 members) Surname : Sheikh	Attire : Clean pajama and Kurta (Muslim) ; clean Dhuti and Panjabi (Hindu) Sari, petticoat and blouse worn by women of both classes. Food habits : meat, rice, vegetables, milk and fruits. Profession : landholders, teachers (heads of both families have B.A. from accredited college) in local high schools (ten grades)	Colour : fair (dark south Italian) Stature : 5'8" average Facial : full lips, broad nose, broad face (cheek bones showing) Hair : wavy
<i>Vaisya</i> (10 joint families and one nuclear family of a silversmith who recently settled in the 2,000-member village. Surname : Kar-makar, Haldar	<i>Pathan</i> <sup>1</sup> (One joint family has about 10 members). Surname : Khan Khonkar (2 joint families have about 30 members) Surname : Khodokur	Clean pajama and Kurta (Muslim) and Dhuti and Panjabi (Hindu) Sari, petticoat, blouse worn commonly by women of both classes. Landholder (Muslim)	Colour : fair (Muslim) darker (Hindu) Stature : 5'8" average (Muslim) ; 5'6" average (Hindu) Facial : thin lips, narrow nose (Muslim) ; broad lips and nose (Hindu) Hair : straight (Muslim) ; wavy (Hindu)
<i>Sudra</i> Surnames : Biswas, Chakar* (10 joint families with 200 members approx).	<i>Dhali</i> Talukdar <sup>2</sup> , Shick-dar (20 joint families with 300 members approx).	Short Dhuti (Hindu) ; Lungi (Muslim) Village grocers and small traders, and cultivators and servants. Education : Primary level. Language : village dialect	Colour : Dark Satire : 5'2" Facial : thick lips and broad nose Hair : very wavy

Hindu caste	Muslim class	Cultural characteristics	Physical characteristics
<i>Mlechhas</i> No surnames : 4 groups known as Chamar <sup>4</sup> , Chandal <sup>5</sup> , Kolu <sup>6</sup> , and Julu a (Total number 15,000)	<i>Nicari</i> No surnames groups known as Majhi <sup>8</sup> , Jola <sup>9</sup> , Darjee <sup>10</sup> , Kamar <sup>11</sup> Jalua, and Kumar <sup>12</sup> (Total number 2700)	Short Dhuti Occupational groups Illiterate Speak only village dialect	Colour : very dark (Dark American Negroes) Stature : 5'1" Facial : very thick lips, widespread nose, high cheek-bones Hair : very wavy

<sup>1</sup>Pathan (settler from N. W. F. P.) (W. Pakistan and Afghanistan)

<sup>2</sup>Talukdar (taluk means a plot of land and 'dar' means holder)

<sup>3</sup>Literally means slaves (at time servants)

<sup>4</sup>Leather worker

<sup>5</sup>Burners of dead

<sup>6</sup>Oil pressers

<sup>7</sup>Fishermen

<sup>8</sup>Boatman

<sup>9</sup>Weaver

<sup>10</sup>Tailor

<sup>11</sup>Blacksmith

<sup>12</sup>Potter

Despite strong opposition from the peasant community, the marriage took place. What followed was rather pathetic. A social ban was put on that particular Khonkar family by the other Khonkars, not only in Bhandarikandi, but in the adjacent villages. Since these Khonkars were too poor to leave the village, they remained and subsequently arranged more marriages with the Dhalis. Though the Khonkars gained financially, their social position was lowered. The Dhalis maintained their original position.

In this context, it must be pointed out that Indo-Pakistan subcontinent is a land of many races and, as I pointed out in the charts, often slight physical differences are accentuated by psycho-cultural means (charts 1, 2, 3). The net result is that both Hindu and Muslim higher class people not only feel culturally different from the lower classes but they also tend

to exaggerate the physically distinguishing features in order to make the social gap between castes or classes still wider. The case study of Bhandarikandi may be substantiated with similar case studies of other villages in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

However, successful class promotion is not altogether rare. In some parts of Nadia, Jessore, Bakarganj, Dacca and Faridpur (East Pakistan districts), lower classes sometimes marry into better class peasant families because of financial advantages. When these unequal (*Ghair Khuv*) marriages take place, the merged members assume a new designation such as, Munshi, Mulla, Biswas, Jawardar, and are sometimes referred to as *Atraf Bhalamanus* ('an *Atraf* made a gentleman').<sup>10</sup> What the ethnographer neglects to mention is the ensuing struggle to acquire recognition. On numerous occasions such *Ghair Khuv* marriages brought ruin to peasant families.

Among the Muslim peasantry of Bengal (West Bengal and East Pakistan) the Ashraf (upper class) includes all undisputed descendents of foreign Muslims (Arabs, Persians, Afghans, etc.) and converts from the higher castes of Hindus. Like the higher Hindu caste members, the Ashraf consider it degrading to engage in menial service or to handle the plough, and they look with contempt upon the ranks whom they call 'coarse rabble' (*Ajlaf*). These include the functionaries, i.e. WEAVERS, COTTON-CARDERS, OIL-PRESSERS, BARBERS, TAILORS, as well as all converts from humble castes. In some instances a third class called *Arzal* or 'lowest of the low,' is added. This class consists of those, such as the *Helalkhor*, *Calbegi*, *Bediya*,<sup>11</sup> with whom no other Mohammadan would associate and who are forbidden to enter the mosque or to use the public burial ground.<sup>12</sup>

It should be remembered that some groups of people claim to be Ashrafs but are not recognized as such by the established Ashraf class. Various gradations existed in the Ashraf class according to the degree of purity of foreign ancestry, together with such criteria as wealth, prosperity, education and the

attainment of individual families. Similarly an occupational subdivision exists among the Atraf.

In a study of Muslim peasantry of East Bengal it was reported :

The most respectable occupations are those of the Darzi, Jildar, Juliwalah, Naubai, Naichband, Beldar, Chamrafarosh, and Nicar. The learned professions such as Hakim, Hafiz, Khwandhar, Macawwir, Mulla and Munshi are respected by all classes. The chief reason one trade is accounted less respectable than another is that the most honoured were originally Mohammadan, the despised ones, Hindu.<sup>18</sup>

Social conditions have been altered a great deal in the seventy years since the above report was published. The occupational groups in the Muslim peasant societies no longer avoid occupations traditionally followed by the Hindus, viz. goldsmith (Swarnakar). Moreover, the rise of the middle class Muslim society in Bengal had a somewhat levelling influence on the caste difference of the Bengal Muslim peasantry.

Although economic decline may have occasioned a change in the occupational status of the Ashraf, the modification is a superficial one. Ashraf pride is based not upon occupations but upon past and/or present associations. It is to be noted that although today's Ashraf class is generally poor, Ashrafs still command much respect among the Muslim peasantry of Bengal.

Caste rigidity is gradually waning among the Muslim peasantry of Bengal. Several factors may account for this. Firstly, the rise of a strong middle class has seen the deterioration of class barriers. Secondly, with the decline of economic power, the higher class is left only with the tradition and memory of a noble past. It becomes increasingly difficult to maintain the *status quo*. Of necessity they step down from their signorial position. Thirdly, unlike Hindu law, Muslim law theoretically does not have any prohibition against inter-marital unions. Therefore, those desirous of breaking the social code need not concern themselves with legal consequences. Last of all, with the rise

of the middle class, the marital barrier which existed between the upper and lower classes tended to break down. The increasing social and marital exchange between the old upper and the newly-emergent middle class removed physical differences between the classes. Today the range of physical variation between the upper and middle classes has become so wide that it is difficult to categorize classes, especially the traditional upper classes and the well-to-do classes, on the basis of physical characteristics.

The Muslim peasantry in West Pakistan and North India are more rigidly stratified than their West Bengal and East Pakistan counterparts. The presence of a peasant aristocracy in West Pakistan and North India may account for this. In contrast to the situation in Bengal, most of the peasant landlords in West Pakistan were Muslims. Most of these peasant landlord classes were of noble descent. Through the generations they consolidated their position by helping the British to rule the country. Their sons and daughters went to British schools and universities. Thus emerged a peasant aristocracy in West Pakistan. It became more prominent by the significant lack of middle class.

Until independence from the British rule, there was no such thing as a middle class in West Pakistan. The aristocratic Zemindar (peasant landlord) existed on one end of the scale and the impoverished and illiterate peasants on the other. Any form of social intercourse between these two groups was prohibited. In cases of social transgression, the transgressors seldom escaped death at the hands of the powerful landlords.

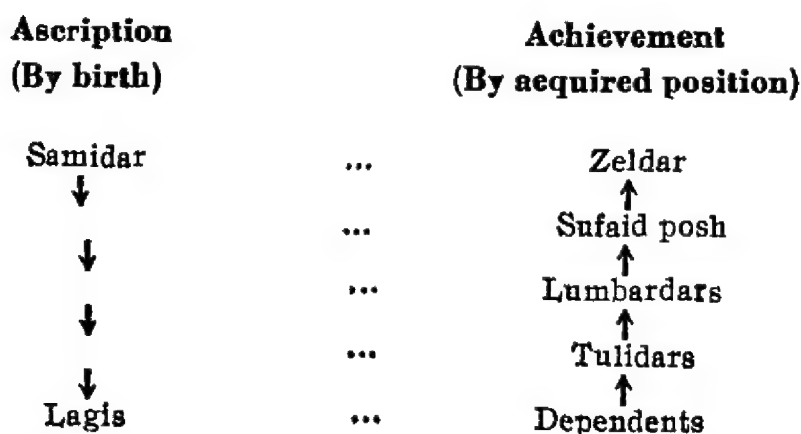
A strong middle class did not appear because in West Pakistan each peasant had sufficient land for his family ; and through hard work, he was able to maintain a subsistent level. Their sons and daughters never really felt the urgent need to try their luck elsewhere. Besides, the peasant aristocrats had already monopolized the learned professions. Instead of belonging to a middle class, most of the people belonging to the professional classes actually belonged to the aristocratic peasant class.



In a study of a Punjabi village<sup>14</sup> it has been reported that structural analysis of the Muslim peasantries among the Punjabi reveals a social unit, not previously described, which is dependent upon social and occupational specialization.

The Muslim peasantry in Punjab is broadly divided between landowners (zemidars) and Lagis (peasants who not only do not but cannot own land). The latter group has a clearly defined lower status in the village. The position of a Lumbardar who collects revenue from Pattis is at times hereditary. The Lumbardars of a village are sometimes called its Panchayat.<sup>15</sup> Tulidars are heads of joint peasant families who are often sought for consultation by the Tahsildar<sup>16</sup> regarding different rural problems. The vertical structure of the cultivating and landowning peasants is as follows :

*Class promotion among the Muslim peasantries of North India  
and West Pakistan*



Arrows going upward signify class promotion possibility. A Lagis can never be a Samidar, but for a Dependent to become a Sufaid Posh (assistant to the head of an administrative unit in West Pakistan) or even a Zeldar is not an impossibility.

A Samidar and a Zeldar are theoretically of the same social level ; but in practice, the genealogical superiority, if any, of one over the other is usually taken into consideration for status recognition by the peasant society. Officially, a Zeldar receives more importance as a representative of the government, but at social functions the Samidar is regarded as the guardian of

the peasants in the locality. The caste difference between the grades of landlords and landholding peasants is veiled. Both Islam and Sikhism explicitly deny the operation of a caste concept. In practice, social interaction, especially marriage, between members of different grades of peasant landholders is rare.

The caste concept is no longer ambiguous when one considers the landholding peasant on the one hand and the different occupational groups on the other. Marital relationship between the landholding peasants and the occupational groups such as BARBERS, WASHERMEN, SWEEPERS, CARPENTERS and SILVERSMITHS is almost impossible. Transgression of this caste boundary means death.

To escape the occupational group is a well-nigh impossible feat. This results from the son's inheritance of group designation. Without exception all factual accounts emphasize the idea that a barber may be called a BARBER and do no barbering. A BARBER does not mean he who barbers.<sup>17</sup> The group of BARBERS includes men who cut hair, women who dress the bride, little boys who carry messages, and men who are marriage go-betweens. Even if a BARBER'S son, receives an education and becomes a teacher, lawyer or doctor, he cannot rid himself of the social stigma attached to his ancestors' occupation. It is not at all uncommon for a pending marriage to be cancelled upon the discovery of such occupational ancestry of the bridegroom or the bride.

Among the occupational groups, the SWEEPER class is regarded lowest and may be compared to the Hindu untouchable. For all practical purposes a person born into the SWEEPER class is permanently confined to that class. Social dealings between the SWEEPER group and the rest of the occupational groups are infrequent. Although occupational groups expect members to remain in their respective groups and to establish marriage bonds within the groups, marital ties between differing occupational groups are not rare.

There is a saying that there are no genealogies in Islam.<sup>18</sup> In spite of the teachings of Islam against genealogy and caste pride, the Meccan aristocracy, soon after the advent of Islam,

assumed the leadership of the new Islamic community and to this day the notion of aristocracy prevails in the Islamic world. Noblest of birth, therefore, is a person who can claim a real or fictitious descent from the Prophet ; next are those who can claim a real or fictitious descent from his clan, i.e., Quaraish and so on.

It is true that class stratification in the Muslim peasantry of the Indo-Pak subcontinent has been augmented by the well-established Hindu caste concept ; but it would be inaccurate to conclude that the caste concept among the Muslim peasantry is wholly a product of the Hindu caste system.

It has been observed that in an attempt to conform itself to the requirements of the Indian social system, Indic Islam loosely patterned social classes on the four main Hindu caste divisions : Syed, Mughal and Sheikh, Pathan, and Muslim converts (Hindu counterparts being Brahman, Khsatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra).<sup>19</sup>

The above theory may be used to explain the rigid class stratification among Muslim peasants of West Pakistan where Hindu influence was less pervasive than in East Pakistan. However, it may be noted that even if there were no Hindu caste influence on the Muslim peasantry, the social structure would still be as rigidly stratified as it is now, resulting from a strict adherence to precedent recognized by Islamic societies as well as Islamic jurisprudence.

The Prophet taught that in the instance of marriage, considerations of birth should be given special attention. Therefore, the Muslim peasantry as well as the upper classes of Muslims in India, Pakistan and elsewhere employ this particular bit of advice to bolster up caste pride and class distinction. The Prophet said :

Take ye care, that none contract in marriage but their proper guardians, and that they be not so contracted except with equals (*Mufy*).<sup>20</sup>

According to the Sunni School of Jurisprudence, six ingredients are necessary to produce equality (*Kufv*) of which descent or lineage is the most important one. Regarding

descent or lineage, certain rules of precedence have been laid down, which are as follows :

1. An Arab is superior to a non-Arab (Agami) Muslim.

2. Amongst Arabs, the descendants of Hazrat Ali come first and the Quaraish rank above all other Arabs, save Hazrat Ali's descendants.

3. The descendants of the Caliphs, although born and bred in other countries are equal to domiciled Arabs.

4. A learned non-Arab (Ajami) is equal to an ignorant Arab, even if he is a descendant of Ali, for the worth of learning is greater than the worth of family.

5. A Qazi (Muslim judge) or a Faih (Muslim juror theologian) ranks higher than a merchant and a merchant higher than a tradesman.<sup>31</sup>

It might appear, *prima facie*, that the restriction of a man's marital choice to families of equal lineage must necessarily produce a system of endogamy as restrictive as Hinduism. This is not entirely the case. Quranic teachings of the Prophet Mohammad as recorded in the *Hadith*, have always cut across the caste barriers and succeeded in producing a sobering influence on caste extremism.

The greater Islamic world culture has always exerted a levelling influence on the small cultures of particular Muslim peasantries of India and Pakistan. The common brotherhood under Islam and the lack of restrictions against social dealings between unequal social classes tended to produce a feeling of togetherness among the Indo-Pak Muslim peasantries. This sentiment among the Muslim peasantries of the subcontinent was brought into sharp focus during the movement in the 1940's for the creation of Pakistan, a homeland for the Muslim minorities of the subcontinent.

The recent trend in the class structure of the Muslim peasantries in Pakistan marks a change in the traditional value system. Due to the impact of industrialization, especially mechanized agriculture, the shackles that bound the traditional class strata are falling apart. Community development projects under the five-year national plans are strengthening the grass roots of socio-political institutions through public participation in different development projects at the local self-government levels. These are likely to make less prominent the age-old caste concepts in the social structure of the Muslim peasantries.

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- <sup>4</sup>Uma, Guha, 'Caste Influence on Muslim Peasantry in West Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Calcutta, November, 1966.
- <sup>5</sup>M. N. Srinivas, *Social Change in Modern India*, University of California Press, 1966, pp. 95-106. See also 'A Note on Sanscritization and Westernization' in *Caste in Modern India*, Bombay, 1962, pp. 42-62.
- <sup>6</sup>Area : 8 square miles. Population : 5,000.
- <sup>7</sup>One of the lowest classes among the Muslim and Hindu peasantries in West Bengal and East Pakistan. *Dhal* is a word which means shield. *Dhali* means shield-bearer, connoting a lower position in the military hierarchy of ancient India.
- <sup>8</sup>Priestly class.
- <sup>9</sup>Chieftain class.
- <sup>10</sup>Abdul Wali Maulvi, 'Ethnographical Notes on the Mohammadan Castes of Bengal', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Volume VII, p. 103.
- <sup>11</sup>Butcher, cleaner of animal inside, gypsy (also mentioned in Reuben Levy, *Sociology of Islam*; Cambridge University Press, 1957, p. 73).
- <sup>12</sup>*Indian Census Report*, 1901, I, p. 544.
- <sup>13</sup>Maulvi, op. cit. p. 109.
- <sup>14</sup>Marion Smith, 'The Misal: A Structural Village Group in India and Pakistan', *American Anthropologist*. (54; 1, January-March, 52) pp. 41-56.
- <sup>15</sup>Ibid, p. 50.
- <sup>16</sup>Official in charge of the administration of Tehsil or administrative unit composed of 100 to 200 villages.
- <sup>17</sup>Marion Smith, op. cit. : p. 45.
- <sup>18</sup>Quran 49<sup>10</sup>.
- <sup>19</sup>See Chart No. 1.
- <sup>20</sup>Bukhari, Sahih, ed. Krehl (Leyden, 1862-8), III, p. 436. Hadith means tradition of the Prophet which has been recorded by Bokhari, Miska, Tabari and other commentators of Islam. However, the age-old difference still exists between the Sunni and Shia Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence concerning the interpretations of the Hadith. (See Levy, op. cit. pp. 180-185).
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid, (also quoted in Nazmul Karmi, *Changing Society in India and Pakistan*. Oxford University Press, 1957, p. 87).

# 'CASTE IN A SOUTH ORISSAN VILLAGE

S. N. RATHA

*(Received on 28 February 1968)*

**Abstract.** This paper describes the background of transformation of a tribal hamlet in South Orissa into a multi-caste village in which the original tribe is still a major component. This transformation has resulted in the emergence of a land-owning caste community and a landless tribal labouring community, the former being dependent on the latter for the entire score of their agricultural operations. The author has tried to show that through this mutually dependent economic activity the tribal and the caste communities have reduced social distance and the tribe has been called upon to fill up a caste-role, i.e. supplying drinking water to some higher caste families in the village. This imperceptibly has opened up a frontier for the tribe to enter into the caste society and to occupy a position in the regional caste hierarchy.

THE data presented here were collected during the month of June in the year 1965 in a village of Koraput district in South Orissa. The name of the village is Chalakamba. It lies at a distance of about seven kilometers to the north of the Sub-divisional town of Gunupur. The river Vansadhara which flows from north to south constitutes its western boundary.

The area of which the village forms a part is sometimes referred to as Saora Hills of Koraput, but Chalakamba is situated in the midst of a plain land, the nearest hills being at a distance of about ten kilometers. There are no roads. A new road under construction cutting through the Saora Hills connecting Berhampur in the Ganjam district with Rayagada in Koraput district passes by Chalakamba at a distance of about twelve kilometers south.

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In the absence of mechanized transport the trade and commerce of the area, which abounds in a variety of forest and farm products, is carried by carts drawn by bullocks and buffaloes during the dry months of the year. When the monsoon sets the cart-tracks become muddy and the hill streams full of water. During these wet months human carriers replace the beasts of burden. All these cart-tracks and foot-paths gradually converge at Gunupur, that being the administrative headquarters. Chalakamba is situated at a place where some of these routes converge before joining Gunupur. As such Chalakamba occupies a very important position in trade and commerce next to Gunupur. Of course there is another place called Jaltar about ten kilometers to the east of Gunupur, the strategic position of which is comparable to that of Chalakamba. But it has not attracted many permanent settlers because of its water scarcity and malarial climate.

These two important considerations, the situational importance in trade and commerce and the permanent water supply from the river, attracted ambitious tradesmen to settle permanently at Chalakamba, at one time a pure Saora village. The villagers say that the founder of the village was one Chalaka (pronounced as Salaka), a Saora. It is said that the first newcomers were some Komiti and Bania families. The Brahmans were to arrive much later when there was a demand for their priestly functions. Though most castes preserve the memory of their original place name yet none can say how long they have been here or when they came. Only this much is possibly certain that from a small, simple Saora hamlet it has grown to the present size and complexity.

At present Chalakamba has a population of 1306. This is composed of six Oriya-speaking castes, eight Telugu-speaking castes and a tribe. The tribe is the Saora. All these including the Saora refer to their religion as Hindu.

The Oriya castes are the Brahman, Gauda (CATTLE-KEEPER), Bania (TRADER), Teli (OIL-PRESSER), Sundhi (LIQUOR-DISTILLER), and the Damba (untouchables, now known as Harijaus). The Telugu castes are the Komiti, Jengam or Lingayat, Kaunsali (GOLDSMITH), Akula (seller of



betel leaves), Mangali (Barber), Chakali (WASHERMAN), Jalari or Nolia (FISHERMAN) and the Telega. All these castes and the tribe are referred to as *Jati*. There is no equivalent for the word tribe either in Oriya or in Telugu. All these fourteen different castes are later settlers. Apart from the Chalaka legend, there are many bushes, trees and boulders in and around the village which are believed to be abodes of some Saora deities. Mounds, clusters of agricultural fields, ponds etc., bear Saora names, whereas the two temples, one dedicated to God Siva and the other to the Goddess *Gram-Devi Thakurani*, the only signs of Hindu settlement, were established only about forty years ago.

The intrusion of Hindu castes and their settlement resulted in loss of land to the Saora.

TABLE 1

*Caste and landholding*

	Population			Landholding in acres		Total
	Male	Female	Total	Wet land	Dry land	
Brahman	26	23	49	9.67	58.45	68.12
Gauda	10	20	30	2.04	2.13	4.17
Bania	7	5	12	6.87	40.71	47.58
Teli	22	16	38	7.35	25.20	32.55
Sundhl	14	14	28	30.81	144.05	174.86
Komiti	148	150	298	61.80	245.27	307.07
Jengam	5	6	11	x	x	x
Kaunsali	20	16	36	5.77	23.09	28.86
Akula	2	1	3	2.23	16.28	18.51
Mangali	5	5	10	x	0.51	0.51
Chakali	10	11	21	x	x	x
Jalari	1	3	4	4.81	7.72	12.53
Telega	4	5	9	x	x	x
Saora	246	244	490	4.24	46.59	50.83
Damba	126	141	267	x	x	x

Note : (i) A Brahman family from a near-by village owns only 0.71 acres of land in the village.

(ii) Government land which includes Roads, Institutions, Grazing land etc. is 113.27 acres.

Out of the total 896.21 acres of private land only 50.83 acres or nearly 5.73% fall to the share of the Saora. This clearly shows that most of the Saoras are landless and have to look for a living by other means.

A cursory glance at the table below, where is listed the traditional and the present occupation of the inhabitants of the village, would show that there is a tendency on the part

\* Many caste families, particularly the Komitis own land outside the village boundary which is not included in this chart. They are in fact the wealthiest single community in the region which gives them a position of dominance

TABLE 7  
*Caste and occupation*

Castes in the village	Traditional occupations of castes	No. of households	Occupations other than traditional									
			No. of households engaged in traditional occupation	Agriculture	Government service	Trading	Shop-keeping	Tailoring	Selling dry fish	Contractual agricultural labour	Casual Agricultural labour	Casual non-agricultural labour
Brahmana	Priest	11	5	2*+1	5*+3							
Gauda	Cattle-keeping and carrying	6	6	1*								
Bania @	Trading	2		2								
Teli	Oil pressing	7	5	5*	3*							
Sundhi @	Distilling liquor	5		4	1*							
Komiti	Trading and shop-keeping	53	51†	48*	2							
Jengam	Temple (Siva) priest	2	1			1						
Kannali	Goldsmith	7	5	2*+1								
Akula	Betel-leaf selling	1	1	1*								
Mangali	Hair cutting	2	2	1*								
Chakali	Laundry	6	6									
Jalari @	Fishing	2		1					1*+1			
Telega @	Agriculture	3			1				2			
Saora	Agriculture	148	8+37*							33	70	
Damba	Weaving	64	43	14*+2	2							17

@ The Bania, the Sundhi, the Jalari and the three Telega families are completely out of their traditional occupation.  
† The number 51 includes only three regular shopkeepers. Others are wholesale traders and do not keep regular shops.  
+ The 37 Saora families cultivate others' land as tenants.  
\* These families take the occupation either in addition to their traditional occupation or some other occupation on which they mainly depend.

of the castes (except the Telega) either to change over to agriculture or supplement their living by agriculture ; whereas the Saora clings to land through tenancy, through contractual agricultural labour, or at least through casual agricultural labour.

TABLE 3

*Agriculture and Employment*

Caste in the village	No. of families	No. of land-owning cultivating families	No. of tenant families	No. of families employing full-time Saora labour	No. of families employing part-time Saora labour
Brahman	11	3	x	1	3
Gauda	6	1	x	x	1
Bania	2	2	x	1	2
Teli	7	5	x	x	5
Sundbi	5	4	x	4	4
Komiti	52	48	x	15	48
Jengam	2	x	x	x	x
Kaunsali	7	2	x	2	2
Akula	1	1	x	x	1
Mangali	2	1	x	x	1
Chakali	6	x	x	x	x
Jalari	2	1	x	x	1
Telega	x	x	x	x	x
Saora	148	8	37	x	x
Damba	64	2	16	x	18

The spatial re-disposition arising out of the settlement of Hindu traders in the Saora country produced a band of land-less 'primitive' agricultural experts on whose service and co-operation rests the entire agricultural productive system of

the village and who in turn are dependent on their landowning neighbours for employment and livelihood.

I shall try devote to describe how the tribal Saora has imperceptibly become practically like a caste.

The Saora chiefly subsist through (i) casual agricultural and non-agricultural labour, (ii) tenancy and (iii) annual contractual labour. These together account for 94.60% of the total Saora households. The land-owning Saora households who are economically more or less independent of their caste neighbours constitute a microscopic minority, accounting only for 3.40% (8 out of 148 households) of the total.

As casual labourers the Saoras are called upon in the beginning of the monsoon to plough the dry agricultural field where cereals, oil-seeds etc. are cultivated, and to prepare the seedling beds for the paddy crop. Most of the Saoras own the necessary implements of farming and maintain a pair of bullocks.<sup>1</sup> When their services are requisitioned they go to work with their own implements and the bullocks. It is not a necessary condition, but the wage-earner is paid extra if he has his own draught animals. His services are again requisitioned for sowing seeds. In the mid-monsoon when the paddy fields are flooded he ploughs them in knee-deep water with the help of the water buffaloes<sup>2</sup>.

When the field for transplantation of paddy is ready, the seedlings are pulled out from the bed, carried to the field and transplanted. This is mostly but not exclusively a feminine job. The Saora women are expert in this. In the meanwhile the dry fields where grams etc. are sown require weeding. A little later the paddy fields also are to be weeded. All these are feminine jobs and the Saora women do it. Practically the operations starting from the transplantation right up to the end of harvest engage mostly feminine labour.

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1. It is not very difficult to maintain the animals because they are not specially fed when they are not employed. They live on forest leaves and grass. When they are to be drafted they are to be fed by the party which requires their services.
  2. The maintenance of buffaloes is costly. So they are only maintained by the landowners.

During these monsoon months cart-transport with the town and all other places from the village is suspended and male labour is diverted to this transport work. Men carry loads with the help of the carrying-pole. The women sometimes do this carrying work, but they carry loads on their head and as such carry only half the male load. Even during the dry months, transporting through human agency is employed if the quantity is small and cart-transport uneconomic.

The seventeen Damba families reported as subsisting on non-agricultural casual labour are also sometimes requisitioned for this purpose.

When the harvest is over and the paddy sheaves and other crops are piled on the threshing floor, cart-transport is gradually resumed and the labour is again diverted to perform the threshing work, gathering the grains, measuring and carrying to fill the granaries. All these are performed by the Saoras only. What the landowner does is supervision through his constant presence during all these operations. The wages paid for these different types of work are on daily basis and may be paid in cash or in kind.

As a tenant, the Saora is perhaps more useful. Table 2 shows that 37 Saora families have resorted to tenancy. The system of tenancy in the village requires some description. On the full-moon day of the month of Phalgun (March-April) the tenants enter into an agreement<sup>8</sup> with the landowner to cultivate his land for the season, the rent of which is fixed at the time of agreement and is to be paid after harvest. The rent may be determined in terms of money or a certain fraction of the expected produce. The former system is called *sistu* and the later *gutta* in the local language. By and large, the big landowners only rent out a part of their land. There is a convention, which of course is not a part of the contract, that the tenant would help the landowner in agricultural operations whenever necessary. His expectations are generally not frustrated because the tenant always banks

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8. All types of contract are entered on that day.

upon the goodwill of the landowner to get the contract renewed next year. Moreover the Saora is famous for his simplicity and proverbial honesty. Through a continuous renewal of such annual contracts there exists a permanent master-tenant relationship between some of the Saora families on the one hand and some caste families on the other. This relationship is fostered in a variety of ways. The Saora tenants bring presents of their produce on festive occasions to their master and in turn are treated to a meal. They supply the annual requirement of firewood at little or no cost. When there is a marriage or any such occasion they come to raise the marriage pandal. It has come to be a conventional duty of the tenant to supply the special wood needed for the sacrificial fire into which libations of *ghee* are poured to the manes or gods in any auspicious Hindu ritual undertaking like marriage, initiation or occupying a newly built house. On all such occasions, the tenant becomes a guest of honour and the whole relationship springing from an economic base becomes something more than that.<sup>4</sup> In addition to this he is given a cotton blanket for the winter and a pair of *dhotis*.

His designation during the period of contract is *Khambari*, meaning a servant.

Formerly, this was the duty of the cattle-keeping Gauda (Table 2), to which it still adheres. The water touched by the Gauda is acceptable to all castes. No other caste except the Brahman enjoys this position in the village. Until recently the Gauda caste could meet the limited demand of his services in the village. During the last two decades, as the younger generation of women of wealthier families increasingly resented the public carrying of water, the demand on the services of the Gauda gradually increased reaching a

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4. The 16 Damba families referred to in Table 3 as subsisting on tenancy are comparatively new entrants in the field of agriculture. In their case the master-tenant relationship has not ramified as in the case of the Saora, because the Damba is regarded as an untouchable and polluting caste. They are chosen as tenants only as a last resort and contracts with them are rarely renewed.

saturation point and producing a rough dichotomy of the division of labour along sex lines, the Gauda men looking after cattle and their women supplying water. The caste being unable to meet any further demand gave rise to a problem as to how to supplement this labour.

Those who had employed the Saora as full-time contractual labourers secretly started using his services for the purpose, telling the inquisitive neighbours that the water would be used for the cattle or for washing. At present it no longer remains a secret. One Bania family, four Sundhi families, fifteen Komiti families and two Kaunsali families publicly utilize the services of the Saora in carrying water from the river for all domestic uses.

Now one thing emerges from the above, namely, that the castes intruded into the Saora territory first as traders, established economic supremacy through the ownership of land and reduced the original tribal population into a state of economic dependence.

Obviously for their own benefit they made the Soara partners in their productive system in the position of labourers. Closer interaction of the Saora with Hindu caste neighbours was originally only on economic lines; but through this intimate contact, he has come to fill a caste role.

Some of those employing Saora water-carriers rationalize that the Saora is certainly better than many other low castes in the village. The BARBER, the WASHERMAN, the FISHERMAN are all associated with some unclean occupation. The Telega is looked down upon because the story attached to his origin is derogatory. It is said that whoever did not have a caste became a Telega, indirectly referring to his unknown parentage. Moreover some of them have taken up the supposedly unclean job of selling dry fish. Damba has always been an untouchable and implicitly remains so in spite of the legal removal of untouchability. The employers of the tribal labour argue that the Saora is not an untouchable. His occupation is agriculture, and hence clean. The basic factor



in all these rationalizations is, as I see it, the demographic preponderance of the Saora and his indispensability to his agrarian caste neighbours.

What is the relative status of the Saora in the total caste structure of the village? Judged from the criterion of the acceptance of water his status is certainly higher than that of many castes of the village.

Here I have described a situation and pointed a direction through which a tribal group has come to occupy a place in a caste society. What is peculiar to this village and its neighbourhood is that the Saora who is culturally different from his caste neighbors, with a different system of worship and belief, enters into the caste fold possibly without much change and is accepted as a *Jati* (caste), hence a part of the Hindu social system in this region.

Caste as a system is certainly very broad based and admits many alien elements and it is interesting to investigate how exactly it works in a limited region and in a given context.

# OPINION LEADERS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES\*

T. SENGUPTA

*(Received on 27 January 1968)*

**Abstract :** A recent study on the diffusion and adoption of Formosan rice conducted in West Bengal, with 279 farmers of a less progressive and 142 farmers of a more progressive village, revealed that the proportion of polymorphic leaders was the least in agriculture, intermediate in matrimonial and highest in voting and dispute situation in both the villages. Also the proportion of polymorphic leaders in all the 4 situations except in voting, was higher in the less progressive village than those in the more progressive one, so that, the trend is towards a decline in the importance of polymorphic leaders with the advance of the community. Although the level of adoption of improved agricultural practices was in general higher in the case of polymorphic leaders, their contribution towards the diffusion of information and adoption of the new innovation was likewise found to be on the decline in the advanced community.

OPINION leaders have generally been recognized as an important step in the flow of communications of new ideas.<sup>1</sup> In the field of agriculture in the developing countries, where literacy is low and other mass media less developed, opinion leaders assume a much more crucial role in the diffusion of innovations. But information on the nature and type of opinion leaders, their capacity of innovation or sphere of influence etc. are by no means adequate. Merton<sup>2</sup> classified opinion leaders into two types, monomorphic and polymorphic, on the basis of their sphere of influence. Leaders who exert their influence in a rather narrowly defined area, have been termed as monomorphic. Other opinion leaders, exerting influence in a number of areas are termed as polymorphic.

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While the majority of research findings as reported by Rogers, indicated that there was little overlapping among different kinds of opinion leaders, he suggested that in traditional societies, where separation of roles is less developed, the opinion leaders would more likely be polymorphic.

In a Pakistani village Rahim<sup>3</sup> found that many of the opinion leaders in farming situation were also the formal leaders of the village. But Rahudkar<sup>4</sup> in a study in a Central Indian village found that the formal leaders of the village were seldom consulted in matters of agriculture. On the other hand, evidences<sup>5</sup> from a developed country show that farmers seek information on different types of innovation from different farm leaders. The results of these studies are therefore not conclusive and a more systematic work is therefore necessary. In a recent study on diffusion and adoption of Formosan rice, carried out in two villages of West Bengal, detailed information was collected on the number and types of opinion leaders, their spheres of influence, levels of improved agricultural practices, and the rate of acceptance of the new variety.

An analysis of these data may be of interest to workers in the field of extension and allied fields.

### *Methodology*

The two villages selected for this study were Kurmun and Pachara, in two different Community Development Blocks, in the district of Burdwan, West Bengal. An intensive programme for agricultural development has been in operation here for the last five years. Kurmun was described by the district agricultural authority, as one of the less progressive villages and Pachara as one of the most progressive villages in the district.

All the 279 owner-farmers in the first village and 142 owner-farmers in the second were interviewed in this study. In the main schedule information was collected on the stage of individual farmers in respect of acceptance of Formosan rice and source of information used at different stages. In the same schedule each of the farmers was asked to name two

individuals in the village from whom he generally sought advice in matters of agriculture. The respondents were also asked to quote two names of their respective opinion leaders in the fields of matrimonial affairs, disputes and voting. Along with this information, the level of adoption of individual farmers or their innovativeness, was determined with the help of a standardized adoption scale. Opinion leaders in the four different fields were identified from the socio-metric choices offered by individual farmers. Individuals receiving five or more than five choices were accepted as opinion leaders in a particular field. No weightage was however given between the two choices offered by the individual farmers to their respective opinion leaders.

Stage of adoption was determined on the basis of the mental stage in which the individual farmers were with regard to the adoption of Formosan rice. The stages were defined as (i) ignorance, where the farmer has neither heard of nor seen any crop of Formosan rice ; (ii) awareness, where the farmer was aware of the existence of the Formosan rice ; (iii) interest, where the farmer actively sought for further information on Formosan rice ; (iv) evaluation, where he mentally evaluated the applicability and desirability of growing Formosan rice ; (v) trial, where he is in a state to try the variety in his field ; (vi) adoption, when he has tried it and decided to continue to grow the variety. The stages of adoption were further assigned scores in the following order : Ignorance—0, Awareness—1, Interest—2, Evaluation—3, Trial—4 and Adoption—5.

The level of adoption of individual farmers was determined from the percentage of applicable improved agricultural practices being used by them. Four improved practices, namely, improved seed, use of chemical fertilizer, plant-protection measures and line cultivation were used in the computation of the adoption quotient. In finding out the number of applicable practices, each practice was given a separate count in the case of each of the crops. Thus if a farmer has grown 4 crops, then the number of applicable practice in his case would be  $4 \times 4 = 16$  and not simply 4. On the basis of mean

and standard deviation of the distribution of adoption quotients, farmers were grouped into five categories, from A to E. These categories have been termed as adopter categories. Category A is the highest of them and is twice the standard deviation above the mean. Other categories were formed at a distance of one standard deviation apart from below A.

### *Analysis and Findings*

The socio-metric choices offered by the respondents in the four situations were analysed and the leaders thus identified and the choices received are presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1

*Opinion leadership in the less progressive village*

No. of choice received in the field of

Sl. No. of Leaders	Agriculture	Matrimonial	Disputes	Voting	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	14	17	72	8	11
2	20	10	—	—	30
3	17	10	16	—	43
4	—	11	—	—	11
5	7	10	10	—	27
6	10	9	12	—	31
7	—	8	83	10	51
8	—	8	—	—	8
9	12	8	12	—	32
10	—	6	17	—	23
11	—	5	—	—	5
12	5	6	—	—	11
13	5	5	6	—	16
14	17	—	—	—	17
15	9	—	—	—	9
16	7	—	—	—	7
17	7	—	9	—	16
18	6	—	—	—	6
19	5	—	—	—	5
20	5	—	—	—	5
21	—	—	62	12	74
22	—	—	18	9	27
23	—	—	8	—	8
24	—	—	—	5	5

It will be seen that in this village there were 24 opinion leaders in the 4 fields. Of them 15 had influence in agriculture 13 in matrimonial affairs, 12 in disputes and 5 in voting. Only one leader had influence in all the fields, 6 leaders in 3 fields, 7 in 2 fields and the rest 10 had influence in 1 field only. The ratio of polymorphic to the total number of leaders was thus 14 : 24 or 58 per cent. In agriculture the number of polymorphic leaders was 9, in matrimonial 9, in dispute 11 and in voting 4. The proportion of polymorphic leaders was thus 60 per cent in agriculture, 70 per cent in matrimonial, 92 per cent in disputes and 80 per cent in voting. So in this village the proportion of polymorphic leaders was the least in the case of opinion leaders in agriculture and the highest in dispute followed by that in voting.

These results may be compared with those obtained from the other village which was more progressive.

TABLE 2

*Opinion leadership in the more progressive village*

**Number of choices received by leaders in the field of**

Sl. No. of Leaders	Agriculture	Matrimonial	Disputes	Voting	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	5	12	47	18	82
2	—	—	35	18	53
3	—	10	13	—	23
4	—	11	18	11	40
5	5	—	7	—	12
6	—	—	5	—	5
7	—	6	—	—	6
8	—	6	—	—	6
9	—	5	—	—	5
10	9	—	—	—	9
11	9	—	—	—	9
12	6	—	—	—	6
13	7	—	—	—	7
14	5	—	—	—	5

It will be seen that in all there were 14 opinion leaders. Out of them 7 were mentioned in the field of agriculture, 6 in matrimonial, 6 in disputes and 3 in voting. Only one leader exerted influence in all the 4 fields, 1 in 3 fields, 3 in 2 fields and the remaining 9 had influences in 1 field only.

So the ratio of polymorphic leaders to the total number of leaders was 5 : 14 or 36 per cent. Of the 9 monomorphic leaders 5 were in agriculture, 3 in matrimonial and 1 in dispute. Of the polymorphic leaders, 2 were in agriculture, 3 in matrimonial, 5 in dispute and 3 in voting. Polymorphic leaders thus constituted 28 per cent of the leaders in agriculture, 50 per cent of the leaders in matrimonial situation, 83 per cent in disputes and 100 per cent of the leaders in voting.

In general, the trend is that polymorphism amongst opinion leaders was higher in all the fields except in voting in the case of the less progressive village and it was the least among the opinion leaders in the field of agriculture in both the villages. From these findings it may be concluded that the proportion of polymorphic leaders is the lowest in the field of agriculture and highest in voting and disputes. Leaders in matrimonial situation occupy an intermediate position in respect of polymorphism. It may further be generalized that with progress of the community the proportion of monomorphic leaders increases and that of polymorphic leaders decreases in all the fields except in voting situation.

### *Innovativeness of Opinion Leaders*

Differences between the monomorphic and polymorphic leaders in respect of innovativeness and acceptance of a new innovation like Formosan rice was studied and the results are as follows :

TABLE 3

*Average adopter category\* and stage of adoption of opinion leaders*

Village	Average of Monomorphic leaders'		Average of Polymorphic leaders'	
	Adopter Category	Stage of Adoption	Adopter Category	Stage of adoption
Less progressive village	2.83	2.50	3.22	3.44
More progressive village	3.16	4.20	3.50	4.00

\* In calculating the average of adopter category they were scored as follows : A-5, B-4, C-3, D-2 and E-1.



It will be seen that polymorphic leaders were more innovative than monomorphic leaders in the same community in both the villages. The adopter category and stages of adoption of both polymorphic and monomorphic leaders were higher in the more progressive village than their respective counterparts in the less progressive village. The result further indicated that in the more progressive community monomorphic leaders accepted the new innovation at a faster rate than polymorphic ones. It would however need further study before a generalization can be made in this respect.

### *Discussion*

It has been observed that a considerable proportion of opinion leaders in agriculture are polymorphic and in general they are more innovative than monomorphic leaders. With the progress of the community the proportion of polymorphic leaders in agriculture, however, tends to decline. This trend also holds good in the case of leaders in matrimonial and dispute situations.

To the extension workers in agriculture, the points of interest are, how to identify opinion leaders and their types and to know which of them are more useful in the rapid diffusion of information on improved agriculture. Ease in identification of opinion leaders, their innovativeness and span of influence or their number of followers are therefore the factors to be considered from the point of view of the extension workers. Further probe into the extent of social participation of the opinion leaders showed that average social participation score, as determined from their membership to formal organizations, was 1.2 and 0.3 in the case of polymorphic and monomorphic leaders respectively in the less progressive village. It therefore follows that polymorphic leaders having wider social participation would be easier to be identified than monomorphic ones. As regards the span of influence in the field of agriculture it was found that the average number of followers for polymorphic leaders was 11 while that for monomorphic leaders was 8. Moreover, the proportion of followers of all polymorphic to all monomorphic leaders was

found to be 97 : 49 or 2 : 1. So in the less progressive village, it seems that it would be both easier to identify and advantageous to deal with the polymorphic leaders. But since the trend is towards decline in the importance of polymorphic leaders with the advance of the community, the extension workers should simultaneously be on the look-out for identification and development of the monomorphic leaders. In support of this conclusion, it may further be mentioned here that, in the diffusion of information on Formosan rice, it was found that 84 communications were made by the monomorphic leaders in agriculture and 68 by the polymorphic ones.

In the more progressive village, the average social participation score of polymorphic leaders was 3 while the same was 1.8 in the case of monomorphic leaders. But the average number of followers of polymorphic leaders was 5 against 7 in case of monomorphic leaders. Also the proportion of followers of all polymorphic leaders to that of all monomorphic leaders was 10 : 36 or 1 : 3.6. It was further observed that in the diffusion of information on Formosan rice the monomorphic leaders of this village made 134 communications as against no communication by the polymorphic ones. It is therefore seen that in this village the proportion of monomorphic leaders, their average number of followers, their total followings and also their importance in the diffusion of new innovations are much higher than those of polymorphic leaders. But here also the monomorphic leaders are less conscious as would be evident from their lower social participation score. So it follows that in more advanced communities it would be more advantageous to work with the monomorphic leaders and due care has to be taken for their correct identification.

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# SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN THE ADOPTION OF IMPROVED PRACTICES

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( Received on 2 December 1967 )

**Abstract.** The study was conducted in a village in Rajpura Development Block (Punjab) to find out whether utilization of information sources in the adoption of improved agricultural practices was related to (1) types of source, (2) frequency of use, (3) stages of adoption, and (4) categories of adopters. It was found that the most frequently used sources of information were not the Extension Agency, but the informal sources like village leaders and friends and relatives of the farmers. The Village Level Worker was used as a source of information by some farmers belonging to innovator and early adopter category,

## *Introduction and Method*

SEVERAL studies indicate that the utilization of sources of information varies at different stages of adoption and in accordance with the characteristics of farmers (Copp. *et al.* 1958 ; Coughneour 1959 ; Lionberger 1960 ; Jha and Singh 1964, 1966 ; Rao and Moulik 1966 ; Sinha and Parshad 1966 and Sharma & Deb 1966).

The present study of the relationship of information sources to the adoption of improved practices was to highlight the following aspects : (1) type of source, (2) frequency of use by farmers, (3) stages of adoption and (4) categories of adopters-

Its specific objectives are :

1. To study the contacts among various sources of information at different stages of adoption process

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by farmers in relation to the use of nitrogenous fertilizer and American cotton, and

2. To study the variation between different categories of adopters of nitrogenous fertilizer in relation to the use of various sources of information at each stage of adoption process.

The study was conducted in the village of Khanpur in Rajpura C. D. Block, Patiala district, Punjab. The village is situated at a distance of about 5 miles from the headquarters (Rajpura) of the Block and of the Village Level Worker. The main occupation of the village is agriculture. The total number of farming families in the village was 45 and all of them were included in the study. Field-work was done during February to April, 1967.

The interview schedule used in the study included questions as to whence the farmers obtained most of the information at each of the stages of adoption. The stages were : awareness, interest, evaluation and trial. The farmers were not pressed for information sources after the trial stage because the results of a satisfactory trial were presumed to be self-sufficient by the farm operators. It also included questions as to how many of the improved farm practices had been adopted by them and since when.

The information sources were grouped into two categories :

- (i) *Formal*, which included in the present village only the Village Level Worker, and
- (ii) *Informal*, which included village leaders and relatives, both inside and outside the village.

On the basis of adoption index, farmers were divided into three categories<sup>1</sup> : (1) Innovators (adoption index 36 and above), (2) Early adopters (adoption index 13-25), and (3) Late adopters (adoption index up to 12).

Relationship of information sources at each stage of adoption with the categories of adopters has been shown only in the case of nitrogenous fertilizer.

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1. In a separate study by the authors the categorization of adopters on the basis of adoption index has been outlined in detail (P. C. Deb and M.L. Sharma, 'Characteristics of adopters of improved farm practices', *Indian Journal of Social Research*, to be published in August, 1968).

*Findings and Discussion***Sources of information at each stage of adoption**

The responses relating to sources of information indicate that different sources were used at each stage in the adoption-process. Tables 1 and 2 show the sources of information at each stage for each practice.

TABLE 1

*Sources of information used at different stages of adoption of nitrogenous fertilizer*

Sources of information	Stages of adoption							
	Awareness		Interest		Evaluation		Trial	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Village Level								
Worker	8	17.8	15	33.3	9	20.0	7	15.5
Village leaders	16	35.6	18	40.0	10	22.2	15	33.3
Relatives and friends	21	46.6	12	26.7	26	57.8	23	51.2
Total	45	100.0	45	100.0	45	100.0	45	100.0

TABLE 2

*Sources of information used at different stages of adoption of American cotton*

Sources of information	Stages of adoption							
	Awareness		Interest		Evaluation		Trial	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Village Level								
Worker	1	4.5	6	27.2	0	0	5	22.7
Village leaders	10	45.5	8	36.4	5	22.7	0	0
Relatives and friends	11	50.0	8	36.4	17	77.3	17	77.3
Total	22	100.0	22	100.0	22	100.0	22	100.0

*Nitrogenous fertilizer* : It is clear from Table 1 that extension agency was not an important source at any of the stages of adoption of nitrogenous fertilizer. The informal sources were more frequently mentioned at all the stages.

At the awareness stage all the four sources of information were used by the farmers, but in varying degrees. Relatives and friends were more frequently mentioned, followed by village leaders and V. L. W. At the interest stage, village leaders were most frequently cited as source of information, while at the evaluation and trial stages, relatives and friends were the most important sources of information.

*American cotton* : It is apparent from Table 2, that as in the case of nitrogenous fertilizer, the most important sources of information at different stages of the adoption of American cotton were the informal ones, i.e. village leaders and friends and relatives.

At the awareness stage, the most frequently cited information sources were relatives and friends, followed by the village leaders. At the interest stage, village leaders and relatives and friends were cited by many, while at the evaluation and trial stages three-fourths of the farmers mentioned friends and relatives as the most important sources of information.

#### **Sources of information by adopter category and adoption stage**

The number and percentage of each adopter category utilizing each of the information sources by adoption stage for nitrogenous fertilizer is shown in Table 3.

*Innovator* : While at the awareness stage relatives and friends of the farmers were the most important sources of information ; at the interest, evaluation and trial stages, the V. L. W. was the most frequently cited source of information.

TABLE 3

*Percentage reporting sources of information by adopter category and adoption stage for nitrogenous fertilizer*

Sources of information	Awareness			Interest			Evaluation			Trial		
	Innovators	Early adopters	Late adopters	Innovators	Early adopters	Late adopters	Innovators	Early adopters	Late adopters	Innovators	Early adopters	Late adopters
<i>Formal</i>												
Village Level Worker	1 (33.3)	3 (20.0)	4 (14.8)	2 (66.7)	6 (40.0)	7 (26.0)	2 (66.7)	3 (20.0)	4 (14.8)	2 (66.7)	2 (13.3)	3 (11.1)
<i>Informal</i>												
Village leaders	0	5 (33.3)	11 (40.7)	1 (33.3)	5 (33.3)	12 (44.4)	1 (33.3)	3 (20.0)	6 (22.2)	1 (33.3)	5 (33.3)	9 (33.3)
Relatives and friends	2 (66.7)	7 (46.7)	12 (44.5)	0	4 (26.7)	8 (29.6)	0	9 (60.0)	17 (63.0)	0	8 (53.4)	12 (55.6)
Number of individuals	3	15	27	3	15	27	3	15	27	3	15	27
Total percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note : Figures in brackets indicate percentages.



*Early adopters* : The most important sources of information were relatives and friends at the awareness, evaluation and trial stages, and V. L. W. at the interest stage.

*Late adopters* : Relatives and friends and village leaders were almost equally important at the awareness stage, while village leaders were most frequently sought at the interest stage. At the evaluation and trial stages, relatives and friends were the most frequently cited sources of information.

### *Summary and Conclusion*

The present study, which was conducted in a village which was comparatively away from the activities of the extension agency, has indicated the following :

The information sources are limited in nature. The only extension agency used is Village Level Worker. The informal sources consisted of village leaders and relatives and friends, inside and outside the village.

In the four stages, awareness, interest, evaluation and trial, the extension agency has not played an important part. At the awareness, evaluation and trial stages, relatives and friends are the most useful sources of information in the adoption of both the practices. At the interest stage, however, the village leader is the most important source.

At the awareness stage, informal sources are most important for innovators, but at the remaining three stages, extension agency has been most frequently utilized.

For the early adopters, while extension agency is found important at the interest stage, in all the other stages, informal sources have been most frequently used.

For the late adopters, informal sources have been found most important at all the stages of adoption.

The present findings indicate the effectiveness of village leadership, and kinship and friendship ties in the adoption of improved farm practices. In a village where the extension agency is not very strong, farmers are still influenced by their leaders, and friends and relatives in the adoption of new practices.

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# STUDIES ON CALORIE CONSUMPTION IN VILLAGE KISHANPUR, BUNDELKHAND.

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*[(Received on 18 August 1967)]*

**Abstract.** The paper attempts to calculate the calorie intake per head per day in village Kishanpur of Bundelkhand (U. P.), situated in *tahsil* Maudaha, Hamirpur district, with the help of actual crop production and the total population dependent. On the basis of investigation, a Standard Nutrition Unit (SNU) of 2,200 calories per head per day has been suggested as adequate for normal health in North India.

## *Introduction*

THE calories obtained from food are the main source of heat and energy in human body and their total intake is a measure of the nutritional standard of a man or a community as a whole. It is true that the calorie intake is not a complete measure of the standard of living of a community; but it does certainly reveal the level of their sustenance and the standard of their nutrition.

A man's diet cannot be assessed in terms of calories alone because a nutritionally adequate diet should contain proportionate amounts of carbohydrates, fats and proteins together with adequate mineral substances and vitamins. But, as the calories are obtained mainly from the major nutrients of food, namely, carbohydrates, fats and proteins, their total consumption can give a rough idea of the diet's adequacy.

It is not possible to assess correctly the calorie consumption of an area merely on the basis of production statistics collected by the governmental machinery, because such figures are

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generally defective and generalized. However, if the production figures are obtained by careful local surveys of existing crop-land use, their conversion into calories will present more or less an accurate picture. It was with this object in mind that the writer noted plot-to-plot use of land in village Kishanpur situated in *tahsil* Maudaha, Hamirpur district, at lat. 25°40'N and long. 80°3'E. The yield of various crops was ascertained by repeated interrogations from the villagers themselves and then the production was worked out by multiplying yield per acre with the acreage occupied by the crops. With the help of actual production thus obtained and the total population dependent on the village produce, Food Balance Sheet was prepared to find out per capita calorie intake in the village. As grains are the major source of calories in the village and meat is not one of the items of their diet, as the villagers are generally vegetarian, the calculations of actual calorie intake indicate the general nutritional standard in the village.

### *Method*

The method adopted in preparing the Food Balance Sheet is briefly described below.

The figures given under the head *Production* show the actual production of cereals as obtained by multiplying the crop acreage with the yield of crop per acre.

There are no imports in the village. The export figures were extracted from the villagers by careful inquiry. These export figures were deducted from production figures to find the *Available Supply*.

The seeding rates common in the village were inquired and an amount based on these rates and the area occupied by crops was stored for sowing in the next year. These seed figures were deducted from the Available Supply to find the *Food (gross)* or the quantities available for consumption.

*Extraction Rates* for converting grain into the shape actually consumed are published in the Food and Agricultural Organization's Food Balance Sheets, 1955, and were adopted by the writer for computation.

Figures in column *Food (net)* are obtained after the application of extraction rates and show the exact quantities of food available for direct human consumption.

The column under *Per Head Consumption* gives the per head consumption in kilograms, grams and the total calorie value per day. The net quantities of food are converted into kilograms and the figure thus obtained is divided by the total population actually dependent on the village produce. This shows the per-head consumption for the whole year. The yearly figure, divided by 365, gives per-head daily consumption. The application of caloric conversion rates published in the *Food Composition Tables for International Use* by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Washington, 1949, gives the actual caloric intake per head per day in the village.

### Observations and Conclusion

Table 1 gives the total area occupied by different crops, yield per acre and their total production in the village while Table 2 is the Food Balance Sheet showing calorie consumption in village Kishanpur.

TABLE 1

*Crop production in village Kishanpur*

Crops	Area in acres	Yield in lb. per acre	Production in lb.
Rice (broadcast)	7.10	615	4,366
Big millets mixed with pulses	97.69	574	56,074
Small millets mixed with pulses	54.02	387	20,905
Wheat mixed with gram	233.43	574	1,34,188
Gram	3.81	492	1,874

The Food Balance Sheet in Table 2 shows that in this village 2,018 calories are taken daily from cereals by each individual. It will be seen that of the total calorie intake in village, 45 per cent is provided by the *kharif* crops and the remaining 55 per cent by the *rabi* crops. The major item of diet is wheat mixed with gram which provides 54 per cent of the total calories consumed in the village. The next important crop is big millets (*jowar* : *Sorghum vulgare* and *bajra* : *Pennisetum typhoideum*) mixed with pulses (*arhar* : *Cajanus indicus*) sharing 29 per cent of the total consumption.

The gross cultivated area (total of both *kharif* and *rabi* seasons) in the village is 410.16 acres in which the per capita share comes to 1.35 acre. It is, therefore, 1.35 acre of cultivated land that provides 2,018 calories daily to an individual in this village.

## Food Balance Sheet of Village Kishanpur

(Figures are given in lb. except where mentioned)

Total Population ...	303	( Figures are given in lb. except where mentioned )									
Commodity	Produc- tion	Export	Import	Avai- lable supply	Seed	Food (gross)	Extrac- tion rate per cent	Food (net)	kgms. per year	gms. per day	Calories
Kharif season											
Rice ( broadcast )	4,366	...	...	4,366	84	4,282	72	3,082	4.613	13	46
Big millets mixed with pulses	56,074	11,215	...	44,859	976	43,883	95	41,688	62.405	171	588
Small millets mixed with pulses	20,905	...	...	20,905	421	20,484	95	19,480	29.132	79	270
Rabi season											
Wheat mixed with gram	1,34,188	26,836	...	1,07,351	23,809	83,542	85	77,010	115.250	315	1,093
Gram	1,874	...	...	1,874	388	1,486	100	1,486	2.224	6	21
									Total		2,018

The calorie requirements of a person vary according to the age, sex, weight and height of the body, the nature of occupation and different climatic conditions. The Nutrition Advisory Committee (NAC) of India has, however, recommended dietary allowances of calories for average Indian 'reference' woman and 'reference' man (*vide* Patwardhan 1960). According to these, the desirable calorie requirements range from 1,790 a day for a 'reference' woman in sedentary occupation and 2,080 a day for light industrial occupation (moderate activity) to 2,430 a day for a 'reference' man in sedentary occupation and 2,780 for light industrial occupation (moderate activity) and among children from 450 a day (after deduction of food received from mothers) for infants under 1 year to 2,675 for teenagers. The average for different categories works out at 2,100 calories per head per day.

FAO has also calculated per day calorie allowances for India which average 1,900 and 2,700 calories for an average woman and a man respectively. These results do not conform with the results obtained by the NAC, but the average per capita (including woman, man and child) consumption per day for India comes to 2,100 calories by NAC recommendations as well as from the FAO scale.

Investigations by Prof. Shafi (1960) in a dozen villages of Eastern Uttar Pradesh have revealed that there was an obvious evidence of malnutrition when the daily intake fell below 2,000 calories, and when the intake rose even a little above 2,000 calories, body weight and health conditions approximated to the national average. These results were based on calories obtained from cereals and sugar only without any consideration of the consumption of milk and other dairy products, fruits, vegetables (excluding starchy roots), oils and fats. However this closely agrees with the results obtained by the writer in the present study.

It will, nevertheless, be unjustified to exclude the important items of diet such as milk and products, eggs, vegetables, fruits, oils and fats which contribute sufficiently to the total calorie consumption of a community. In the absence of a careful survey of the consumption of these items in the



village, an allowance can be made to these items on the basis of daily average food supplies in India.

Sukhatme (1965) has calculated for India the per capita daily food supplies together with the calorie and nutrient content for the year 1958.60. He has estimated that out of a total calorie intake of 1,970 per head per day, 243 calories are obtained from fruits and vegetables, meat, eggs, fish, milk, oils and fats. In the village under study meat, eggs and fish, constituting 12 calories (as arrived at by Sukhatme, 1965) are not included in the diet. Hence, after their exclusion, it is found that 231 calories or 12 per cent of the average consumption is supplied by fruits, vegetables, milk, oils and fats. If, however, we take 10 per cent as a convenient figure for the consumption of these items, it will not make any great difference as the main source of calories in the village are grains.

The addition of 10 per cent for these items to the total consumption of calories as obtained from cereals in village Kishanpur thus makes  $2,018 + 202 = 2,220$  calories. This figure is slightly greater than that recommended by the NAC or FAO, but the latter is, however, based on the average for India as a whole while the former relates to the actual consumption in the village.

It is therefore concluded that under the conditions prevailing in Kishanpur, Bundelkhand (North India), a consumption of 2,220 calories per head per day is sufficient for average health. A former study by the writer (Siddiqi 1966) shows that in a village in U.P. the calorie consumption was 2,309 per head per day, and the standard of health there was also good. From these two studies it follows that in U.P. or North India the minimum daily requirement for average health is 2,220 calories per head. More precisely, it can be said that 2,200 per capita per day form a general Standard Nutrition Unit (SNF) for North India in order to compare the nutritional standards of people living in other villages of the region. However, it is presumed that the diet providing 1 SNF

consists of the variety of foodstuffs with an adequate quantity of proteins. It is also presumed that the essential quantities of 'protective foods' required to maintain average health are also included. If the diet is sufficiently varied, the vitamin intake will also be adequate.

#### A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

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## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### 1. The Dispersal of a Village Settlement

The changing pattern of settlement was studied in a village in Barmer district, Western Rajasthan. The region in which the village is located is characterized by low erratic rainfall (normal annual about 200 mm), sandy soil, undulating land surface dotted with sand dunes of low and medium height, extremes of temperature and high wind velocity. The village has a population of 230, among whom 100 (43.5 per cent) are Muslim, 51 (22.2 per cent) are Jats, 43 (18.7 per cent) are Bhils, 21 (9.1 per cent) are Bhambis, 7 (3.0 per cent) are Rajputs, 5 (2.2 per cent) are Bishnois and 3 (1.3 per cent) are Suthars. The chief sources of livelihood are agriculture and livestock raising. On an average a household has 10.55 hectares of agricultural land and 0.88 bullocks, 3.16 cows, 2.00 cow-young, 0.28 buffaloes, 0.02 buffalo-young, 1.32 camels, 2.58 sheep and 10.55 goats. Occupational castes like Bhambis and Suthars also follow their caste occupations (leather-work and carpentry respectively), though the earnings from these are rather limited.

In the past the village had a totally compact settlement. There were several factors which prevented the dispersal of households. There was only one well. The Jagirdar (feudal landlord) did not allow other wells or tanks to be dug in different parts of the village as the trees, shrubs and grass in the outlying fields were meant to be conserved for use during years of scarcity. As such, households could not settle elsewhere. Also, since the man-land ratio was very favourable, households were able to sustain themselves by utilizing land for cultivation and livestock raising just near the compact village settlement. Security was another consideration. With the growth in population it became increasingly necessary to bring the distant fields also under the plough and to give greater attention to livestock raising and cultivation. This could

be possible only by settling on the arable land since the holdings and pastures were at long distances from the *abadi* (nucleus village settlement) and the approach paths were very poor. Wells and tanks were allowed to be dug and after the abolition of *Jagirdari*, encouragement was given for more intensive cultivation by advancing loans for these purposes. After Independence, security was also forthcoming in ample measure. The process of gradual dispersal of the settlement has been in operation for the last few decades. 42.9 per cent of the households interviewed reported that they themselves had moved from the nuclear village settlement to the *dhani* (dispersed dwelling), 28.6 per cent reported that the movement was made by their parents, 25.7 per cent reported that the movement was made by their grandfathers, while 2.8 per cent reported that the movement was made by their forefathers. Now the village has both a nuclear compact settlement of 51 households and 11 clusters of dispersed dwellings near wells and tanks which have been named after the persons who got them dug. A study of the caste and kinship composition of each of these clusters shows that households belonging to the same lineage groups tend to live together. Other cohesive forces are affinal and uterine ties and caste. Similar trends were seen in other studies ( Bose and Sen 1963 ; Bose and Malhotra 1963 ).

The tendency in this village has, therefore, been first for a compact settlement to grow and then for the households to disperse. The latter, again, has been gradually characterized, in the first instance, by residence in the fields only during the agricultural season followed by taking up permanent residence there. A similar trend has been observed in some other villages of Western Rajasthan (Bose and Saxena 1965). A variation has also been observed in several villages where some households from outside established themselves directly in their fields while others first settled in the compact settlement and later moved to the fields (Bose and Malhotra 1963).

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## 2. Deer-hunting in a Bhumij Village

When I visited the Bhumij-dominated village of Madhupur (Chandil P.S., Singhbhum) in 1950-51, I was told that the last time that a deer had been hunted by the 'traditional method' in the jungles of the village was around 1945. The deer was killed by a reputed archer, Budhu Sing. The following account is based on Budhu Sing's narration of the case in the presence of a number of fellow villagers.

One evening, a few villagers came to Budhu Sing and told him that they had seen a deer at the foot of the Jambira Hill. It was decided that Budhu would lead a hunting party to kill the deer. But they had first of all to get the approval of the village Headman (Ghatwal) who would perform certain rituals to initiate the hunting. On the following morning about thirty persons, all male and belonging to the Bhumij tribe, assembled under a *kusum* tree 'to discuss the strategy of action.' A few of them went to the Ghatwal and told him : 'We have seen a deer in the village forest and we want to go out for hunting. Kindly plead with the gods on behalf of the hunters.' The Ghatwal agreed and took his bath in a tank and brought a brass pitcher full of water to the *kusum* tree mentioned above. This was the site of Badri, the God of Hunting. The Ghatwal worshipped the god with incense, molasses, unboiled milk and *ghee*, and poured water on the spot saying : 'Oh Dharma, you be the witness ! I promise to

god Badri that if we succeed in killing the deer, then I will offer him sweets. But if we fail, we shall not offer him anything.'

The actual hunting operation had to be preceded by a process of divination about the location of the deer. Four members of the hunting party assembled in front of the same *kusum* tree and marked a few dotted lines of vermilion paste on the ground. Then, one after another, four hunters sat behind the line of vermilion dots facing the *kusum* tree, got possessed and began shaking their bodies severely. When all the four possessed persons declared that the deer was hiding in a specific nook in the jungle, the hunters decided that they would beat only that portion of the jungle. The next task was to divine the direction from which they would start driving the deer. All the while, the hunters had kept their bows and arrows at the foot of the *kusum* tree to receive the blessings of the god, Badri. The Ghatwal then formally picked up the bow and arrows of Budhu Sing from the base of the tree and handed them over to him. The other hunters picked up their implements themselves and all of them saluted Badri by lying prostrate on the ground.

The assembly was then divided into two groups—the hunters, about 8 in number, and the beaters about 22 in number. It is said that the beaters restricted their driving exclusively to the spot indicated by divination and, as expected, the deer rushed out of the jungle and was killed by Budhu Sing by one shot from his bow. The ears, tongue and the hoofs of the deer were immediately cut off and kept in the forest, wrapped in *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) leaves for Sitka Bagal, the Divine Cowherd of Badri. The carcass of the deer was then brought under the *kusum* tree mentioned before and its skin was scaled off. The meat was divided into equal portions, one for each hunter. Only the killer of the deer and the Ghatwal, each received an extra share. The Ghatwal was also entitled to receive the skin.

On the following morning the Ghatwal took the head of the deer to the foot of the *kusum* tree and offered milk, molasses, *ghee* to Badri in fulfilment of the previous vow

Budhu Sing, the successful hunter, then offered sweets to Bhangat Kudra, one of the temperamental tutelary gods of the village.

It will be clear from the above account that deer hunting operates more as a solidarity ritual than as an economic enterprise.<sup>1</sup> In this case, it gathers the members of a hamlet together and brings into relief the role of the chieftain, the Ghatwal.

The highly-ritualized role of the Ghatwal in the hunting rites indicates that the village Headman had dual functions in the past. Even today, one occasionally hears that the house of the Ghatwal is referred to as *Laya Ghar*, the house of the Priest. As we trace the genealogy of the present Ghatwal, it is observed that the Ghatwal was the Laya only three generations back. Later on the office of the Laya was differentiated from that of the Ghatwal and Laya-ship descended along a junior segment of the same maximal lineage as that of the Ghatwal.<sup>2</sup> Such differentiation of the once-combined roles of the Headman (Munda) and the Priest (Pahan) also took place in the course of evolution of the Munda of Ranchi.<sup>3</sup>

#### NOTES

1. The same is true in the case of annual *disum sendra* hunt among the Santal (Datta-Majumder 1955 : 31), *phagu sendra*, among the Munda (Roy 1912 : 474-76) and the multi-tribal *desh sikar* on the Dalma or Ayodhya Hills in the former Manbhum district of Bihar.

2. For an ethnographic account of the changing pattern of Bhumij society, see Dalton (1872 : 173-177) Risley (1891 and 1915) and Sinha (1953, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1962, 1963).

3. S. C. Roy writes : 'On the death of the founder of the village, his eldest son would come to be the patriarchal head of the different branches of the family. The whole village acknowledged his chiefship in matters temporal as well as spiritual, for, in those



early days the functions of the Munda or secular head of the village and of the Pahan or the ecclesiastical head do not appear to have been separated' (Roy 1912 : 117).

Surajit Sinha

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### 3. Letter to the Editor

Dear Colleague,

One of the most neglected aspects of ethnography has been the culinary arts. Although there exist in the literature myriad scattered accounts and although there have been a few notable studies in ethnobotany, still there is no central publication for the reporting of the nature of foods used, the methods used in cooking them, recipes gathered in the field, or such matters as utensils, customs, or classifications related to food. With the desire that this situation be remedied, I would like very much to hear from any anthropologist or other scholars in disciplines with an interest in food or nutrition who might be interested in discussing the possibility of beginning an ethnoculinary journal.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

**Tibet : Considerations on Inner Asian History.** By *Nirmal Chandra Sinha*, with a Foreword by *Franz Michael*. Pp. xvi + 71. 1967. Firma *K. L. Mukhopadhyay*, Calcutta 12. Rs. 10.

The author who is Director of the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology in Sikkim is primarily a student of History. He has contributed from time to time various essays relating to Inner Asia and Tibet in which the views expressed have quite often been very original, and contrary to some of the popular notions on the subject. Thus, for instance, his view on the Simla Convention, on the European concept of 'Sovereignty' as applied (or mis-applied) in the case of Asian Law and Usage go against ideas prevalent on the subject both in Britain, India and China. Sinha has apparently founded his case upon firm logic. His analysis of the historical status of Tibet and of the country's status during the world war II also establishes in an unassailable manner that Tibet was a sovereign State, and not under China, even during the war period; although India was perhaps the first country to state officially that Tibet was part of China.

Mr. Sinha has produced a book which ought to be of immense value to the External Affairs Ministry of the Indian Government; which may find enough grounds in some of these essays for a re-examination of their established notions.

It is a book which should be in the hands of administrators and scholars alike.

N. K. Bose

**Garo and Khasi : A Comparative Study in Matriarchal Systems.** By *Chie Nakane*, Pp. 187, 1967. Mouton & Co., Paris and The Hague, published on behalf of the *Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne*.

Dr. Chie Nakane's report on the Garo and Khasi kinship systems is marked by considerable industry and care, and by an analytical ability of a high order. But she is perhaps at her best in the chapter devoted to a comparison between various kinds of matrilineal organizations which occur in different parts of the world.

While comparing some of the African or Pacific communities with the Garo or the Khasi, she demonstrates convincingly how matrilineal systems, firstly, cover a wide spectrum, and, secondly,

that their structures are not exclusively determined by rules of descent, but are substantially modified by factors like 'ecological needs', 'concepts of property' and 'commonness of residence' due to the needs of economic co-operation. She shows how these have created the wide range of social structures that come under the common denomination of Matriarchal Systems. In one place she also tells us how some matriarchal systems find it difficult to face challenging economic pressures and thus fail to retain their special identity (p. 143).

Sometimes Dr. Nakane finds herself in partial agreement with Kroeber and sometimes in disagreement with Firth or Eggan. But she maintains her independence throughout; and her reliance upon her own field-observations which have led her to modify the observations made by the anthropologists named above forms perhaps the best part of the book.

In the appendix she presents some additional material on two Khasi villages operating under two distinct ecological conditions. The economy, migration and marriages taking place within and outside the tribe have been carefully described, and she shows how, in spite of various other changes, the basic matrilineal elements have been retained in the culture of the people.

Although the observation is not a major one, yet it is perhaps necessary to refer to a misunderstanding which occurs in the appendix. It has been stated that the inhabitants of Shella (p. 168) are 30% Christian, 40% converted Hindus of the Ramakrishna School, and the remainder Khasi. This is evidently not quite correct; for the Ramakrishna School or Hinduism in general does not proselytize. Christianity or Islam are unilinear or exclusive in contrast to Hinduism, which is more like a federation of faiths professed by various communities who have come under a common social or economic system. So that one can retain his Khasi beliefs and practices, and call himself a Hindu or not, more or less, as he likes. Hinduism does not require the abandonment of Khasi faith.

N. K. Bose

**The Church in the Kond Hills : An Encounter with Animism, By Barbara M. Boal. Pp. IX + 149. Published by The National Christian Council of India, Nagpur. 1963, Rs. 2.50.**

This book on the Church in the Kond Hills by a missionary who was in active service there seems to be of great interest to all

those who are interested in the life and advancement of the tribal people of India. The first part of the book (pp. 1 to 56) gives a detailed account of the social organization of a Kui village as well as of their religion and culture. The rituals of the Kond, more particularly those concerned with fertility, disease and agricultural prosperity, have been presented with commendable objectivity. The second part (from page 57 to the end) firstly gives us a history of missionary activity in this part of Orissa. It also describes in detail the growth of the Church and the problems facing not only the organizers of the Church but also the new converts. The problems of poverty, ignorance and superstition, and the new challenges thrown up by increasing contacts with secularism through governmental agencies and also with Hinduism through trade, have all been examined with fairness. Suggestions have been made as to how the Christian community can progress in their religious and social life according to the best standards of the Church. The passion of the missionaries in bringing about not merely a formal but a true conversion in spirit is evident in many of the chapters of the book. It is this faith in the rightness of one's Church which keeps a noble band of missionaries working devotedly at their task under the difficult conditions prevalent in isolated areas like the Kond Hills.

N. K. Bose

**Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow.** By Sarat Chandra Das. Pp. xii + 101 + Appendices (Pp. vii + 33). 1965. Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, Calcutta 12. Rs. 10.

The book under review is a reprint of its first edition in 1893. It was delivered in the form of lectures by the author, Sri Sarat Chandra Das, the first Indian Tibetologist of modern times. Das was also one of the first to succeed in getting access to Tibet and observe it at close quarters. In the present work, he has outlined the lives and achievements of the ancient Indian pandits who visited Tibet and China and worked there for the cause of Buddhism.

Published as it was in the last decade of the nineteenth century, it is at places either outdated or sketchy and in the light of the present available materials, some of its assumptions are definitely controversial. But in spite of all, it is still a work to reckon with and its historical value can in no way be denied.

An Introduction by N. C. Sinha and the Appendices add to its value.

Dineshwar Prasad

**Common Birds.** By *Salim Ali and Laeeq Futehally*. Pp. x+118+97 coloured plates. 1967. Rs. 9.00. *National Book Trust, Delhi*.

**Common Trees.** By *Dr. H. Santapau*. Pp. 148. 29 plates. 1967. Rs. 5.25. *National Book Trust, Delhi*.

Under the chairmanship of Dr. B. V. Keskar, the National Book Trust has been doing an excellent service by the publication of a series of books entitled 'India : The Land and People'. This series is designed to bring to the average reader a comprehensive account of the geography, geology, agriculture, zoology, sociology, etc. of our country.

The two books under review form a part of that series and are from the hands of two of India's very best scholars. Mr. Salim Ali's name is well known to every lover of birds in India ; while Dr. Santapu is famous as a botanist and as the former Director of the Botanical Survey of India. Both the books are written in a style suitable for those who are unfamiliar with technical terms, yet both succeed in conveying a large amount of scientific and useful information.

We do hope that the series will be of help in the diffusion of scientific knowledge about our country and of its people among our educated classes.

N. K. Bose

**Adbhunik Bharat men Samajik Parivartan.** By *Professor M. N. Srinivas* and translated by *Nemichandra Jain*. Pp. 214. *Rajkamal Prakashan Private Limited, 8 Faiz Bazar, Delhi-6*. Rs. 10.00.

This book is a Hindi translation of the original book, *Social Change in Modern India*, written by Professor M. N. Srinivas. As a matter of fact this book is the result of four talks which the author delivered at the University of California, U. S. A., during the session 1962-63.

It has five chapters dealing with sanskritization, westernization, social mobility, secularization and on methodology, apart from two forewords, one by the author himself and the other by M. B. Emeneau of the University of California, Berkeley ; notes ; bibliography ; glossary of the relevant Hindi terms ; and an index. It runs into 214 pages and has a satisfactory get up. The book is dedicated to Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard.

The translation has been very ably done without twisting the author's idea and expression, and without using difficult



(Sanskritised) Hindi words. Above all Mr. Jain has also taken special care to give to the readers an exhaustive glossary at the end of the book.

B. N. Sahay

**Problemy Ekonomicheskogo I Sotsialnogo Razvitiya Nezavisimoi Indii.** (Problems of economic and social development of free India) *Editors-in-chief, G. G. Kotovsky and S. M. Melman, 'Nauka', Moscow, 1967.*

The book, which has grown out of a collection of essays written by members of Indian section of the Institute of Peoples of Asia, Moscow, consists of two parts. The first deals with the present state of Indian economy and the problems facing it. The second part covers almost two-thirds and is more relevant from our point of view. It analyses the social and class structure of the village as well as the urban society and tries to indicate the direction of change that is taking place consequent upon the growth of modern industries and penetration of capitalistic elements in village economy.

The transformation is both quantitative as well as qualitative. If mechanised agriculture and fully modernised industrial complexes are coming up, they are bringing under their fold ever-increasing numbers. This has also meant an unwieldy expansion of the governmental apparatus absolutely unjustified by the growth in its activities. The members of the new bureaucracy, who outnumber the rising proletariat in the fields and factories together with white-collar workers of other categories like primary school teachers constitute the petty bourgeoisie, a fact which the authors in the present volume fail to mention concretely.

The petty bourgeoisie have gathered strength and are getting powerful day by day. This is manifested by their repeated strikes, strike-threats and capacity to hold the community at ransom at sweet will. Thus two decades of efforts to create a socialistic pattern of society have resulted in the emergence of petty bourgeoisie.

The village scene presents almost the same picture. The mechanisation of agriculture, the extension of credit and allied facilities without carrying out land reforms have worsened the lot of the share-croppers, landless peasants and tended to entrench the petty land-holders along with the big cultivators. The latter, however, do not number much.

It is vital to recognize this fact-for it has important implications regarding the future of Indian society.

On the whole the essays are stimulating and a profitable study for the students of modern Indian society.

Surendra Gopal